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THE
DRAMATIC INSTINCT
IN
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

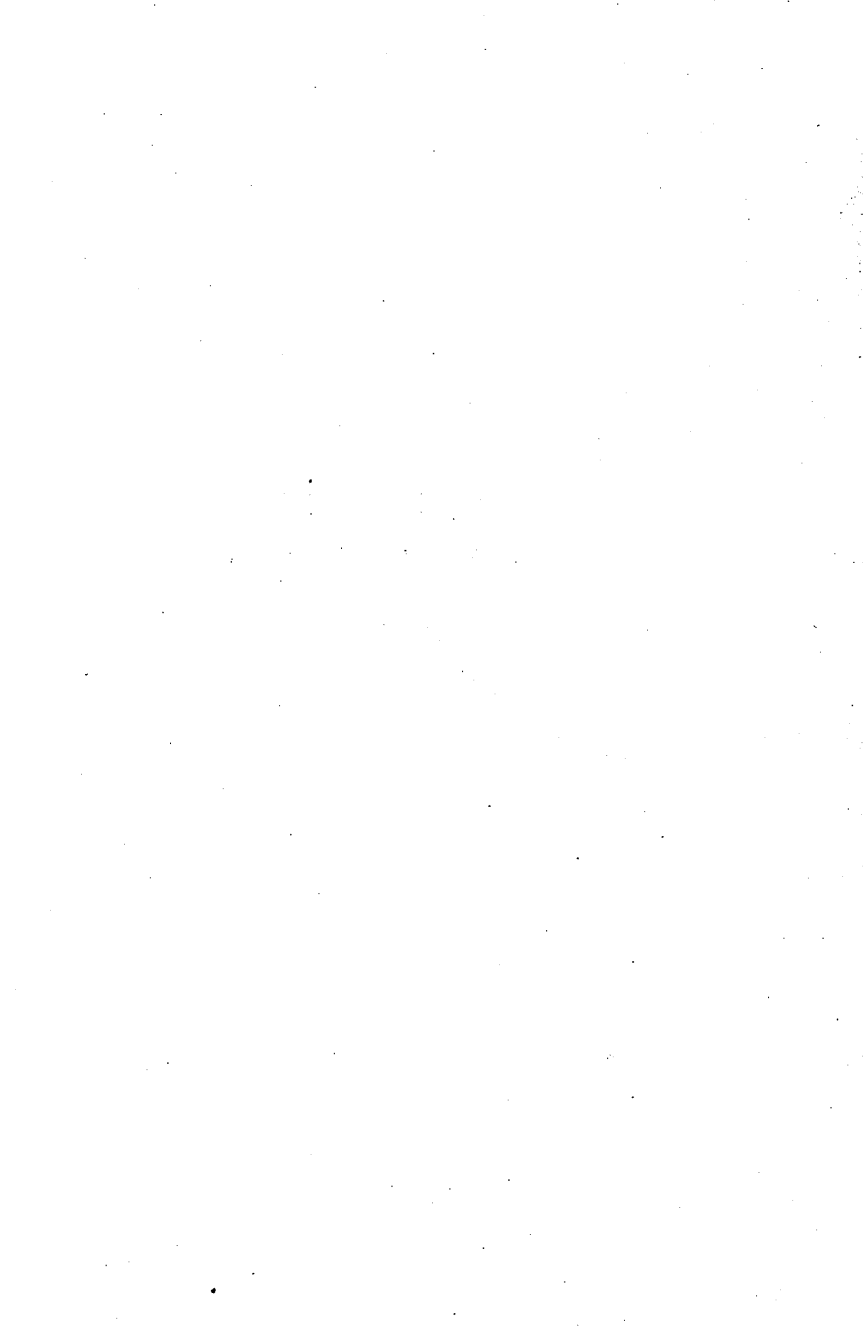
THOMAS WALTON GALLOWAY

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**THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT IN
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**



THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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"The Use of Motives in Teaching Morals and Religion"

"Textbook of Zoology"

"Biology of Sex for Parents and Teachers," etc.

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This book is affectionately dedicated to a body of religious workers, the most remarkable in organization and spirit which the writer has known,—the Second Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Illinois.

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PART I
FIRST PRINCIPLES

CHAPTER I

AN EXPERIMENT IN DRAMATIZATION

In a certain church school there was a teacher-training class. It was studying about attention and interest, the point of contact in teaching, natural impulses and instincts, about motives, motivation and other things that modern psychology has given the teacher for his help and confusion. It was decided that this class should organize and conduct an experiment. It was believed that children like to act out things that interest them; like to carry into effect the impulses that move them. It was felt, furthermore, that we do not bring the Bible stories close enough to the modern child to give him the training in emotions and attitudes to which he is entitled.

The members of this class had heard of the wonderful success which the ward-school teachers had been getting by putting the literary stories of the grades into dramatic form and allowing the children to play them. Cinderella, Evangeline, the classic myths, and many other stories had been treated in this way. They noticed that the children liked these things, would work hard at them, would enter very fully into the spirit of them, and would give them as plays and as pageants with great pleasure. They knew

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also that the classes in history in the grades and in high school had been allowed to dramatize and stage, in play or in pageant, episodes in colonial history. It was currently reported that the children enjoyed their history better and learned more about the spirit of it than in the old way. They heard the public-school teachers insist that these dramatizations gave clearness to ideas; helped the timid, backward, sensitive children by encouraging natural self-expression; helped to develop the social and cooperative emotional quality in the children; gave them better knowledge of and taste for choice words and phrases; begot better expression in oral reading; aided memory and strengthened imagination, and even gave practice in discrimination and judgment; gave more power, therefore, and disposition to interpret whatever they might read; helped mold moral standards. Most of all, they heard that this device added to the joy and satisfaction with which the children entered upon these undertakings. It gave the emotional and spiritual element so largely lacking in most history teaching. They knew that little can be done in sound education unless the child himself is satisfied and convinced.

These young teachers decided that in all probability the beautiful parts of Hebrew life and literature could be made more full of meaning to the children in the church school in the same concrete way. It was believed that a child who studied a Bible story with the idea of making or acting a little play, such as children are always staging and acting for one another

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in their natural relaxations, would have a much better idea of it, would assimilate it better, and would be much more likely to remember it helpfully and be fond of it than is usually the case. They felt also that even those children who did not take part in the plays, but merely saw them given by others, would find more meaning in them and come to appreciate the Bible stories better than if the stories were merely told or recited in class. Seeing them acted would reinforce the oral teaching they had received.

Reasoning in this way, the class appointed a committee to examine into the matter and to formulate a plan for starting something of this kind as a part of the work of that church school. They were asked to select some suitable incident from the Bible and to see whether or not they could get some class to present it, either as a part of the opening exercises of the church school or in connection with the church service in the evening. The committee selected the story of Joseph for the purpose. In this first attempt they themselves undertook to arrange the drama rather than ask some class to do it. In doing this the committee used, wherever possible, the stately words of the King James version and undertook to make the dialogue harmonize with this as far as practicable, both in spirit and phraseology, so that the children might keep the general atmosphere of the Bible even in the play. The "stage business" was arranged; a class was costumed and trained in the little drama until they could enter into its spirit and give it in

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such a way that they and their hearers might feel that it was very well done. In all of this work it was insisted that the purpose was in no sense to stage an artistic performance. There was no desire to have the audience compare the acting and appointments with those seen in the theater, but rather to compare them with the work done in an ordinary church-school class at its lessons. The object was to get some appreciation of the episode, faithful study of the whole surroundings of it, and a free and genuine expression, in dialogue and in act, of the pupil's idea of what was meant by it, rather than a finished and artistic piece of acting. The idea was to develop the boys rather than the drama.

This little play, together with some special music and an exhibition of some of the hand-work of the various grades of the church school, furnished a most interesting Sunday evening to a crowded house. The parents of the children in the church school were especially invited. It was accepted by most as a kind of recitation by the class of boys upon this stirring and impressive piece of biblical biography. It was considered a success. To be sure it involved quite an unexpected amount of work on the part of the committee. The classes of larger boys were not quite sure at first that it was not just an old-fashioned "Children's Day" performance disguised, in which it was rather beneath their dignity to participate. But by getting a popular young man to take the part of the aged Jacob, and some athletic young fellows to

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take the rôles of some of the elder brothers, it became possible to enlist a class of boys who would ordinarily scorn it as a job for girls.

It is of course too much to expect that *all* those boys got and retained *all* the spiritual meanings contained in this story; but it is quite certain that few of them will forget the main facts of Joseph's life as long as they live; and there is no doubt that they worked longer and harder at getting into the spirit of the early biblical times than they had ever done before.

This experiment was conducted years ago and is now an old story in that church. Out of it, in the minds of those who have carefully observed, has come the realization that this type of work has quite a definite meaning and value in the child's appreciation of the Bible and in his moral and spiritual growth. Out of it came the offering of prizes for the best selection and dramatization of Bible incidents by classes of boys and of girls in the church school; the presenting of numerous such stories in play form, and always to crowded houses; the using of the play form frequently in many of the younger classes as a method of class exercise for the regular lesson.

It has been found that the constructing of the drama is even more educative than the presenting of it; that often older classes, which would not care to appear publicly in the episodes, get pleasure and profit in making the suitable dialogue and stage business for younger pupils; that nothing else has ever secured more thorough study of biblical situations, customs,

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principles, and applications. The experiment has broadened the whole idea of expressive work in that school, and has emphasized its educational value.

Incidentally several members of this teacher-training class spent a good deal of time in laying out dramatic incidents, in polishing up the lines, in coaching and otherwise wrestling with the exuberant young actors. There is no question that they are better teachers today because of their work in this experiment and what grew out of it, nor that the boys and girls are better off from their intimate contact with these young teachers. After all, most of our successful teaching devices get much of their value from the increase of the personal contacts. The experiment was a great educational success. It has made more of the Sundays of the year "Children's Days" in a very real sense of the word.

And out of this experience has come this book.

CHAPTER II

SOME TEACHING PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THIS EXPERIMENT

The great aim of our moral and religious teaching is very easy to state, although very hard to secure. We want to develop in our boys and girls the *power* and the *disposition* and the *habit* of making right decisions or choices, whatever may be the circumstances. Choice is the most important, the most revealing, and the most educative thing that we ever do. Everything that we believe or know or desire or purpose focuses on this point; when we choose we show just what it is that guides and controls our actions. Choice is at the core of character.

1. *The two great methods of reaching choice*

Of course, choice is so deep in personality that we cannot reach and mold it directly. The only way in which it can be educated is for the individual himself to choose. *The act of choosing trains in choosing.* Clearly we cannot make a decision for another. If we do, it ceases to be his choice and educates him only to depend more completely upon us. There are, however, two avenues whereby we may indirectly aid in influencing choices without destroying the per-

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son's active participation. In the first place, we may impress the personality on the receiving side, and thus influence the springs of choice. That is, we may teach the child or inspire him; we may appeal to his desires and thoughts, standards and ideals, and thus furnish him with more ample motives to choose in this or that way. We do this by giving information, by suggestion, by example, by exhortation. Most of our teaching is of this kind. It is impression. Knowledge and judgment, likes and dislikes, experiences and habits, ideals and purposes, all influence our choices. Anything we can do to modify any of these will help to determine choice. They are all capable of being modified and educated. They may be weakened, strengthened, or refined.

On the other hand, we may educate and modify choice through the results and the outcome of choices. Choice results in action, and action is attended by satisfaction or dissatisfaction, depending on what we have done and on the effects of the act. No sort of teaching or impression has so much influence on choice as this. If we can encourage right action, and *help to insure the satisfaction that comes with right expression*, this is the more certain of the two ways of getting the right action repeated, and thus of forming right habits both of acting and choosing. We effectively educate right choices through what the child does, if we can provide the proper satisfactions or discomforts in connection with these acts. This is the crucial point in all pedagogy of attitude and character.

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2. *The complete personal reaction*

Right training, however, does not exalt either of these methods of reaching choice at the expense of the other. Perfect teaching involves presenting the truth so as to stimulate the receiving side which leads up to choice, using the proper desires and experiences and ideas and ideals that minister to it, and then seeing that all this impulse expresses itself in decision and action, followed always by the satisfaction that flows from the right expression and the discomfort that attends the wrong. It is pernicious to teach and inspire and not have the impression find its way on into expression. It is just as bad for the child to be denied the comfort and gratification that belongs to right choices. It is equally wrong to protect the child so that he may not experience the discomfort that should follow his wrong choices.

It is by this natural round of stimulus, inner appraisal, choice, action, and reward that we educate the whole of personality. Impression without choice is abortive. To expect choice and expression without adequate stimuli for the springs of choice is the height of unreason. Such action would be a mere spasm of unrest with no adaptive meaning.

3. *The use of expression in modern education*

For many centuries formal education was almost entirely a matter of instruction, which was supposed to provide the pupils with knowledge. In the progress of education we have learned at least three things: first,

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that knowledge is by no means the most important goal of education; second, that there are better ways to knowledge than by instruction alone; and third, that desires and satisfactions, which so profoundly mold personality and life, are highly educable. Knowledge is but the first step in real education. It may make a full man, but it alone cannot make either a satisfied or an efficient man. We must add to the understanding of a situation the right inner emotional response and the outward action which it requires.

On the other hand, we have found, even if we are seeking knowledge alone, that it is never quite our own until we have given some sort of expression to it. It is for this double reason — to make knowledge more real, and to give us more than mere knowledge — that we have put into our schools so many new activities that make for satisfaction by way of practice. These have exactly the same purpose in training for everyday life as the laboratory and the “project” have in teaching science, and as the hospital or clinic has in connection with the medical school.

4. The principle applied to religious education

Where can we find a clinic in which we can secure some really expressive work in connection with our church schools? The tendency has been to do our teaching there, and to leave the putting of our teaching into practice chiefly to the unguided chances of the pupil's life on the street, in the home, and at school.

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The instruction of the church school and the actual situations of life must be brought closer together. To help bring this about we can do two things: we can make better use of the various forms of self-expression which are possible in the church school itself, devising and multiplying situations which have some of the educative qualities of a laboratory "project"; and second, we can accept life in the home and school and street as the real laboratory, and in greater degree than at present go with the pupil into these situations and help and encourage him to try out our teachings in the choices and decisions necessary in every-day activities.

The essence of the teaching clinic is that one's first expressive applications of his instruction are not left to chance, but are somewhat limited and so directed that there may not be failure because of meeting difficulties which are too numerous or too great for the student to cope with at his present stage of attainment. The training for the medical profession and the training for Christian living alike need supervised expression and practice intermediate between the instruction in the schools and independent life. If we are to secure the union of appropriate behavior and inner character with the stimuli we offer, we ourselves must in some way follow the pupil of the church school into his life, or we must secure the intelligent cooperation of his family, his school-teachers, the supervisors of his play, and his companions in securing right and satisfying choices. Some-

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thing is possible in all these directions, and must be sanely worked out by teachers of religion. It is not our purpose here to follow the application of this principle further.

5. Expressive work which is possible in connection with church-school teaching

Not all kinds of expression are equally valuable. Some activities train the hand and eye primarily, and the mind and spirit incidentally. Others call forth immediately the mental and spiritual reaction. But let us not mistake. Any choice and action that plays on interest, enlists attention and appreciation, guides to wholesome activity and gives the child satisfaction, has its value to morals and religion.

Expression of what is taught may be of two kinds, representative or original. In representative expression the pupil tries to portray or illustrate a truth or relation which he has learned, with no direct reference to actual life. In original expression the pupil applies the lesson that he has learned to meeting the new and concrete problems and demands of life that he faces, both within the church school and without. To bring about sound original behavior is, of course, the culmination of the teacher's work. His great task is to imbed in the behavior of the pupil honesty, obedience, fairness, self-control, and the other attitudes about which we teach. Nor can these qualities be said to have any place in character unless they show in behavior. If our teaching does not modify conduct

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now, we cannot justly expect that in some mysterious way it will come to do so in later life.

As a means of preparing the way for this most vital and final part of the teacher's work, expression which is merely representative serves a valuable purpose. Representative expression is largely, though not wholly, a use of imitation and repetition by which we fix in personality, through action, the really essential teachings. It may take three forms. The first of these is *handwork*, in which the pupil gives expression to his knowledge by constructive use of materials such as clay, sand, paper and pencils in building, modeling, drawing, map-making, etc. This aids in fixing and impressing facts, and ministers to physical skill, and to mental and moral exactness. Again, representative expression may be by *words*, as in recitation, essays, stories, etc. This is used more than any other form of expressive work and has real value. Its weakness lies in the fact that expression of a truth by words alone does not necessarily lead either to action or to conviction in harmony with that truth; and if this form of expression is used exclusively it increases the danger of divorcing knowledge from conduct, and speech from experience. It needs reinforcing by some deeper form of expression which will both fix the words and verify them by connecting them in consciousness and purpose with that which they picture of attitude or of behavior.

In the third form of representative expression, which is *acting* or *dramatization*, the pupil uses, in

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addition to words, the whole expressive equipment of his own personality. Furthermore, if the acting is to be well done, he must realize and reproduce within himself as far as is possible the very impulses and motives which prompted the words and the actions of the person whom he represents. Clearly it is a much more vital and complete form both of appreciation and expression than either handwork or speech, especially in the extent to which it stimulates and expresses motives.

6. *The principle of motivation*

In recent years there has come to teachers a greatly strengthened realization that the value of any activity is much increased if the thing done appeals powerfully to some of the strong, natural desires and tendencies. Things that we do half-heartedly and unsatisfyingly leave little helpful impress upon character. This is drudgery; and real drudgery is only and always deadening in its effect. This statement does not imply that disagreeable tasks are to be ignored either by the young or by their parents and teachers; but that it is the instructor's part to find a way to make a thing that is worth doing appear worth while and to furnish both zest and satisfaction to the pupil whom he guides.

A strong internal motive for doing anything makes us more certain to accomplish it; but, more important still, what we do with such a motive influences our character more than what we do with little interest.

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We do better work and we are left in better spirit. After the primary essentials of method are mastered, skill in teaching consists very largely in the practical application of this principle. This does not mean "soft teaching." One of the very motives to be stirred may be the desire and the satisfaction of mastering the weakness which prompts one to neglect a task because it is unpleasant. "Motivation" makes, not for little tasks, but for great incentives.

The appeal to motives in church-school work is not a new thing. We have boosted interest with picnics on July 4th and Christmas trees at the end of the year; with buttons and medals and prizes all along the way; with competition between classes, between boys and girls, and between "red and blue" teams, with banquets for the winners. But these crude attempts have at best had little value in furthering our real aims. Their pedagogical shortcoming is that they center the motives almost entirely upon objects not strictly a part of the church school itself and develop states of spirit which should be very foreign to it. The inducements are artificial and superficial, and they frequently appeal to impulses in the child which are of questionable character. For example, we often appeal to personal greed and pride and rivalries in order to produce results in the way of enrolment or attendance in an institution whose very object ought to be to help to eliminate or control these crass forms of selfishness and competition. Our whole system of encouraging and rewarding selfish competition in

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material things is the greatest barrier to a possible Christian civilization. Since we strengthen motives by giving them play and satisfaction, would it not much improve our pedagogical position and secure better motivation in religious education if we should drop our dependence on pride, greed, and rivalry, mingled with fear for the hereafter, and substitute for them the biggest, sanest use we can make of the natural curiosity of the child, of his impulse to imitate, of his native trustfulness and sympathy in and for all, of his legitimate play instincts, of whatever respect for authority he may have, of his desire to be doing something and to be producing results, and of his proper liking for leadership in those things which he can do best?

7. Dramatic action as a means of motivation in church-school work

In our church schools we are trying to make the children able and willing to make right choices in life. Knowledge of the great, inspiring teachings of the Bible will help in this. But, in order to have it so, we must make these incidents and teachings interesting and appealing to the children. We must bring the Bible to them in an attractive way, and we must lead them to it through their natural desires and impulses. The child is curious to know the truth of life. He is fond of stories. Both these facts we use in our ordinary efforts to make him acquainted with God through the Bible. Another exercise, which appeals greatly to most children, is this one of acting. They

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give themselves up to it with much zest. If we can arrange biblical incidents for them in the form of little plays we can supply a new and strong motive for study and appreciation. Such performances are close to the play instinct of children, are related to the talking impulse, involve the impulses of imitation, of repetition, of social cooperation, and of leadership. In addition to this, imagination is strongly called forth and is brought to play about vital problems of life for which we are seeking to prepare our children; for any story which lends itself to dramatization is of necessity based upon the fruition in conduct and the outcome of choices which have a deep significance and a universal appeal.

The Bible is rich in material that the children can put in dramatic form and act out conscientiously, and with a surprising degree of understanding. There is strong truth and broad appeal in its pictures of life. Just as soon as one undertakes to dramatize a biblical incident he comes to appreciate this anew. The effort to get the incidents assimilated into the nature of the child by way of the drama reveals how real and human it all is. Such an approach makes the Bible appeal to the belief of the child in a stronger way than mere reading can do, and relates its teachings more closely to his conduct. It is a method of teaching which furnishes strong motives for careful study on the part of the children, and which helps them to find the truths and to assimilate them emotionally as ordinary routine study could never do.

CHAPTER III

DRAMATIC EXPRESSION AS A MEANS OF MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. *The acting impulse and its meaning*

We have already noticed how generally children give attention to "acting" and "plays" at certain periods of life. Doubtless most of us can recall in our own childhood how we would make up situations and, alone or with other children, act out our own ideas of them. Doubtless we can remember the pleasure we had in these plays of our childhood. It may be that many of us in the quiet of our rooms even wrote little dramas of our own, in which we poured out many of our ideas of life and its early tragedies.

Possibly we may have forgotten our own childhood. If so, we have only to watch any little girl at play with her dolls, or any boy with his soldiers or animal toys to see the whole performance again. We shall soon realize how much of the playing is organized into series of little dramatic pictures of the real life that the child knows. This very naturalness and commonness of the impulse show the part it plays in normal development. It shows that the child is interested in it, is pleased and satisfied by the exercise. In just the degree in which this is true it must be important in building up the inner life of the child. This impulse motivates

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very much of the natural behavior of children from early childhood to middle adolescence. So much time and attention could not possibly be given and fail to minister to attitudes, points of view, and habits of thought as well as to skill in expressing these states. Possibly these fictitious situations are not as educative as are real ones; and yet it is not safe to be too sure of this. As a matter of fact, they are not so unreal to the child as we feel them; for it is certainly true that the child has great power of giving actuality to imaginary conditions. It is further true that the child is more naturally himself in these situations which he has manufactured than in those of actual life which are often made for him and which may well seem strange to him. There is really more of himself in the plays. Without question he learns greatly from them. Equally without question we might learn more about the child by observing him under these conditions than in what we are pleased to describe as real life. All this is said entirely in agreement with the view that no child should be allowed to live perpetually in the realm of imaginative expression.

2. The forms of dramatic expression in youth

In the illustrations used above of dolls and soldiers we have the first form of child drama. It is individual. The child plays all the parts. He makes all the transitions himself, even though he may do so by giving life to his inanimate toys. A little later these children add social plays in which each child has

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its rôle. Each child of course likes to play the leading rôle; and the acting is at first social in form rather than in spirit. Every child insists on being a star. They play school, church school, church, home life, and other relations that they know or imagine. They visualize what takes hold of their imagination in what they have heard or read. The boy plays soldier or hunter or wild Indian or pirate or bear, as suits his instincts. The girl plays fairy, neighbor, Red-Cross nurse, church-school teacher, and the like. Doubtless the emotional life in these is just as rich and the expressions of it just as genuine as with their elders in real life. Consequently they are really and socially educative.

As the child matures the plays become more and more social. The individual "stars," at least temporarily, cooperate in true team play. Thus their acting, which is at first a training in self-expression and the egoistic submergence of the self in a fictitious character, takes on more and more of the real social attitude. In this case the self becomes submerged in the general result in which all the actors share. This marks progress in forgetfulness of self. The playing establishes easy highways of habit from emotion, through choice, to action and back again to attitudes. What we need is not to accent the separateness of the plays from real life, but sanely to connect them with it.

Somewhat later in life, when boys and girls come to give more attention to one another, there is another period in which the drama again appeals with special

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force. This is the period of amateur theatricals. The motive becomes more social than before and emphasizes this new attraction of the sexes. Usually the ideals are sound and the expressions wholesome. It is a period of impressionability to the great ideas of chivalry, consideration, sympathy, appreciation of the points of view of the other sex, and the like. Heroes and heroines loom large in these plays; but the impulses and the expressions are really social. They may well be practiced in high dramatic activities as a part of constructive and normal sex education.

3. *Why does this appeal to the child?*

It is easy enough to see that dramatic representation is pleasing to the child. It is easy also to see the advantages in it. It is not so easy to be sure just why it is so appealing. Somewhat the same thing is true of the play instinct, of which indeed the acting impulse is a part. We are not sure that we understand exactly what it is that makes the young animal and the child play. We know it contributes much to the education of both; but this fact is not the reason why it gives pleasure. They are not seeking education. Perhaps to say that it is natural to get pleasure out of any spontaneous self-expression helps some; but we still need to inquire what causes this to be one of the agreeable forms of self-expression. Possibly it is made up of the desire of the child to be doing something, together with the impulse to imitate what it sees and to repeat what has given pleasure,

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colored throughout by imagination, which is so much of the life and joy of the child. At any rate all of these attitudes and impulses enter into acting, and all of them are among the things that drive children to do what they do, and all of them give pleasure.

4. *The states to which dramatic activity ministers*

It is clear that all these native tendencies which lead the child to act will be developed and modified by the acting. The state of the actor in "forgetting himself," which is essential in good acting, has a distinct value in all social education. He must also master the situation through actual knowledge or through constructive imagination, so that he may put himself temporarily in the place of the persons portrayed. In doing such a thing as this he not merely imagines, but must also comprehend, interpret, appraise and reconstruct the states of mind and the actions of those he is representing. He imagines himself as possessing these qualities and points of view. To do this he must dispossess himself and go into the part without reserve. This helps free the child from self-consciousness in his actions. Briefly, dramatic action encourages the instinct of reading oneself into situations and of expressing oneself in these situations. It cultivates the imagination in connection with self-expression. We are too apt to suppose that imagination is confined to apprehending and appreciating. It is receptive, to be sure; but expression has just as really its imaginative aspects, and we need to

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cultivate these. The preparation for such dramatic work calls for a mastery and memory of the important elements in situations as nothing else does. It increases self-reliance, as well as respect for the rights of others in the play. The drama is more convincing than reading or recitation can possibly be; that is, it more fully impresses the truth on the mind of the pupils. It appeals to the mind both through the eye and the ear of those who see and hear it, and, in addition, through the act of expression of those who play.

Furthermore, the acting-out of these states of mind, which the child has temporarily made his own, helps to establish an open connection between ideas and the appropriate behavior. We are somewhat more free to do the right thing in a play than in real life. This connection, even in a play, helps just that much, however, in stamping in the right links between mental states and conduct, between theory and practice. In other words, by using the play to help create habits of right action, we are giving ourselves the advantage of training along the lines of least resistance and surest response. The child may be brought by these events permanently to associate pleasure, satisfaction, and uplift with carrying right ideas into righteous expression.

5. Relation of such acting to moral qualities

The last sentences in the preceding paragraph will suggest in what way this kind of expression has a value in education in morals and religion. This whole

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process of acting is full of emotional elements. It is scarcely a rational matter. It deals rather with the primitive instincts. The imagination and self-effacement in the child's spontaneous acting are closely related to the qualities on which faith, confidence, sympathy, devotion, wonder, and worship depend. They are closely allied with our religious and spiritual states. Religion has always made much of this imaginative spirit in art and literature, and in music and ritual.

So far as expression is concerned, the act of doing the right thing in imaginary situations, as has been said, is an aid in forming the attitude and habit of doing the right thing under actual conditions. By the proper selection of characters and situations we can, under the sweep of the play, teach the lesson and at the same time secure the expression of the truth in conduct, and, what is a matter of some importance, without preaching or threats. To be sure, this action is not original, is not strictly the child's own; but in so far as it is right, his mind is more free and quick to recognize its rightness and appropriateness in a play than in real life perhaps. This has not the moral value that right choice and expression have in actual life; but it does have a value. We are securing real responses under conditions that we can control, and are thus bringing the pupil much closer to real original right conduct than we do when we stop with right instruction. The play is a mild kind of clinic or gymnasium in which right behavior is had under the most favorable conditions.

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Something of the strength of the appeal of the drama to the sound moral sense in us is seen in the heartfelt applause of the street urchins in the peanut-gallery when the villain in the melodrama gets his deserts. The artistic theater-goer regards this as crude and naïve; but it illustrates the aid the play gives to right association between situation and response. As a means of moral instruction, such representative performances are intermediate between mere instruction and the real choices in life. They are better than mere teaching, but not so good as actual, self-initiated action in real life. Even seeing other people carry right actions into effect in such a play is better than merely being instructed about what is right. Both of these experiences are good intermediate steps in our efforts to secure right behavior. We should, of course, see to it that the pupil does not end his right conduct at this half-way point of make-believe action. Righteousness in the drama is not the final goal of moral training! Social spirit in playing is not the completed product; but it is a possible stage, and an incentive. We should use it to help the youth make the transfer to actual situations.

CHAPTER IV

THE USE OF THE BIBLE AS A SOURCE OF DRAMATIC MATERIAL FOR CHURCH-SCHOOL PUPILS

1. *The dramatic quality of the Bible*

The Bible itself furnishes a very real incitement in respect to dramatization. It is full of very dramatic material of a type peculiarly on the childhood plane, and continually inspires to the dramatic use of it. The historical books consist of a succession of stirring episodes in the lives of the tribal and national heroes. One can hardly doubt that the Hebrew children, in the days when their history was being handed down largely by word of mouth, played over and over these heroic incidents related to them by their elders. This dramatic characteristic in the Bible is doubtless due to the primitive and oriental type of mind both in the writers and the hearers. These people delight in concrete pictures of events. They are full of imagery, but it is always concrete, even when immaterial ideas are pictured. This is true even of as spiritual a passage as the Twenty-third Psalm. This consists of a series of images in a very concrete form, full of dramatic suggestions. Yet there is no passage in the Old Testament perhaps in which there is more of spiritual content. This concreteness coupled with imagery is just the thing that appeals to the child-mind. It was intended to interest and to guide the

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thinking and conduct of this oriental people. In many respects they had the point of view of children. Doubtless, too, the writers recognized the value of the dramatic appeal. They had not merely a truth to impart; they realized that they must convey it in the most effective way for the audience to which they were writing. The effectiveness in such instances is quite as much due to the form as to the message. This is what we mean when we refer to the literary effectiveness of the Bible.

2. *The strength of the Bible stories*

After making due allowance for the fact suggested in the preceding paragraph, it must be recognized that one of the most interesting points about the Bible stories is their appeal to people of all ages. They present a remarkable progressive revelation of truth, so that they are used by us with different meanings and appreciation as we pass through the stages to our maturity. In childhood we get and enjoy the broad, extravagant sweep of the pictures. It kindles our imagination and inspires our wonder. As we grow older different view-points develop, until at last we read into the episodes all the spiritual meanings that we have mastered. They minister to all stages of human growth of spirit. This is the great wonder of them: they always contain and convey a suitable message to most varied grades of insight. The marvel is that they can successfully carry so many kinds of freight. This means they are cosmopolitan, universal, true, inspired.

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It is to the child, however, that the dramatic element is at its maximum. We could not, as adults, find satisfaction in acting out the story of the garden of Eden. Our minds are busy with the allegory, with the spiritual values, with the degree of success or failure of the effort to explain the philosophy of human conditions as we find them. The child, on the contrary, would get the lesson which the story has for him in the literal picture. To him it would be a drama capable of being played.

3. *The proportion and moral values in Bible incidents*

The great gain which we have in the moral and religious education of the child from using the Bible episodes rather than other stories for dramatic purposes is this: the episodes and incidents of the Bible have, throughout, the moral view-point. They preserve a sense of values, of balance, of proportion, which we do not find in most literature. We may have, to be sure, the record of trivial human incidents, as the falling of the traveler among thieves, or the taking of the golden wedge by Achan. But the setting and the interpretation of these incidents always bring them out of the trivial into the universal. They are considered as related to the whole universe order and to the spiritual movement of mankind. In this way they are dignified and are made to represent the real relations of conduct to character and to God. The sense of this makes them big and appealing.

It is just because the Bible has this fine sense of

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proportion, which is pretty nearly what we mean by religion, that its incidents are so convincing, in spite of the bringing in of the supernatural elements. Furthermore, the real significance of this superhuman element will be more readily accepted without shock in the imaginative process of acting than in mere cold teaching. In thinking of it as a story, and in acting the incidents, the problem as to the historic truth is of little importance. The question is rather, "What is the truth taught?" This is much the more important question, and tends to postpone the historical one until the child is better able to consider it. Anything we can do to get the child to accept and assimilate the essential Scripture truths before the thought of their particular method of transmission is raised is most helpful.

4. *The dramatic method as a method of mastery*

If the biblical matter is really as valuable as we claim to believe, if its message really may lay hold of the spirit of man and open, inspire, and uplift it, it becomes necessary that our young people shall do two things. They must master the essence of the message, and they must come to have a sympathetic acceptance of it. The test of mastery here is not memory; it is assimilation. Assimilation means, as we have seen, to take into one's personality and to work over raw material of any kind until it is completely a part of oneself. This process is peculiarly necessary in all education that involves motives, choices, and

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conduct. We can conceive that information might be taken in and just remembered bodily, without this intimate building-in process; but we cannot expect information to mold choice and life and give moral values without this deeper mastery which works back into character through conduct.

The dramatizing and acting of these episodes involve a kind of conduct, imitative and representative to be sure, but still demanding personal attitudes, choice, and expression. This exercise insures a fuller assimilation than can be had from mere instruction unless the pupil is peculiarly sensitive and tractable and imaginative. The test of mastery in such dramatic work is power *to do*, *to express* adequately and convincingly—and not merely knowledge or memory.

5. The securing of sympathetic acceptance and a liking for the Bible

We all know that it is very important, in our use of the Bible as a moral and religious stimulus to children and young people, to get them to be interested in it and to like it. We also know that our efforts in this direction are usually not very successful. Too often, even in the best instances, the attitude toward the Bible is somewhat unenthusiastic, unconvinced, and strained. There may be a certain respect and reverence, a fair recognition of its human values; but we cannot justly claim that we succeed in getting our children really fond of the Bible, or so very enthusiastic about it. This is in part because we have insisted that they

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shall love it because it *is* the Bible rather than for more vital, internal reasons. In part it is because we have not discriminated as to the difference of appeal which the different parts have for children and youth. In insisting on the impossible, we have failed to get the reasonable. Many parts of the Bible we cannot rightly expect children and youth to become interested in.

It is more important to get a sympathetic attitude toward the Bible and a real fondness for portions of it than to have a loveless knowledge of it all. The child can be brought to an admiration for and interest in its great heroic, imaginative, and dramatic pictures of life. There is no better way to do this than through the repetition of these as stories, dialogues, dramas and pageants in the early life of the child. Its vividness and reality, the assimilation of it, and the increased sympathy and liking for it make a good foundation on which to build our later teaching. Presenting it in a dramatic way forces us to select suitable material, to deal with it in a way adapted to the appreciation of the child, and to emphasize it as his emotional and expressive life will allow. In a word, it forces us to a closer grading of the biblical material to the development and the sophistication of the child, and this is itself a good pedagogical result. Apart from any possible public showing of the materials and merely as a means of instruction, dramatization is one of the best possible forms of class exercise.

CHAPTER V

HOW TO CONSTRUCT A BIBLICAL DRAMA

In this chapter the writer wishes to bring to the reader some of the practical features that were worked out in the course of experiments in dramatizing the Bible stories. It is not merely a matter of theory that great truths can be put in form both attractive and easily assimilated by means of the drama or pageant. It has often been proved so in practice. In making a start in such work as this there are three very practical considerations, all of which have educational value for church-school workers: the selection of suitable episodes; the making of the dramas; and, finally, the presenting of the dramas.

1. Selecting the episodes

The selection of the episodes for dramatization should, of course, be done with pedagogical perspective. The story should be adjusted to the general development of the group; though in this connection it must be borne in mind that the same episode may well be used for different ages, if only the treatment of it be specifically adapted to each. It will be adapted to them if they have the chief part in dramatizing it, as is advocated in the next section.

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It is not essential that all the incidents be taken from the Bible, although it will be found a very rich source. Missionary stories of the Christian heroes who have spread the gospel from the first century onward; inspiring incidents from God's movements in human history; great pictures from literature in which the moral and religious truths show forth strongly: all these may furnish material to illustrate the same truths set forth in the Bible and thus may reinforce and supplement it. These will help convince the child that the truths of the Bible can be depended upon to reassert themselves through all the ages. Their spirit and value are not limited to biblical times. "Pilgrim's Progress," which few children would read unless drawn to it by some such aid, will furnish many episodes which can be presented dramatically, and thus win the pupil to an interest in the whole story.

Special and appropriate dramatic incidents may well be selected and worked up for special occasions, as Rally Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year, Easter, Children's Day and July 4th. Similarly, if it is the policy of the church school to emphasize for several weeks in its opening worship elements suggested by such words as faith, reverence, good-will, communion and the like, it is possible to select incidents in the Bible or elsewhere and so develop them as to make both the actors and the hearers find the appeal of the idea more real.

At the outset it is better to select some simple incident which carries a single and obvious lesson

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with direct and readily traced movement, and thus use it as a definite educative project. It will be more easy to develop, and hence will not offer so many possibilities for discouragement and failure as a too ambitious theme might offer. As experience in dramatizing and in training comes, it will be easy enough to develop more complex stories. Such an incident as that of the Good Samaritan or the visit of the shepherds to the manger will be suitable to begin with. If it were desired to give as complex a story as the life of Joseph, it would be better to begin with one incident of it, as the selling to the Ishmaelites, or the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream. Gradually a number of these scenes may be worked up, and presented separately. Finally, they may be woven into a continuous story and presented on one occasion. Such a plan allows for a maximum of the advantages with a minimum chance of discouragement. The selection of suitable incidents demands some ability to read between the lines and to imagine or visualize the physical features of the incidents, so that these in turn may be made to carry the lesson naturally. In dramatic action, it is essential that the thing to be taught shall be vitally connected with the movement, and not be merely tacked on in words.

2. Building the dramas

This is, of course, the part of the work that gives the teacher the greatest educative opportunity and responsibility. If this is well done, the final presenta-

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tion merely becomes the pleasant, natural climax of the whole interesting experience. In order to make the most of it, the teacher must cordially realize the whole remarkable opportunity, by means of the child's play and dramatic impulses, to give him interest in the sayings and actions of great characters; to inspire him to analyze and study situations and to discover the essential and striking elements in them; to enable him to visualize from words the practical "business" that will sincerely present a situation; to motivate, as a step toward success, the mastery of many details of surroundings, customs and the like; to cause him to appreciate, beneath the words, the spirit that makes the incident sincere and real, and thus enable him to sense something of good and bad character and motives back of action. The great and peculiar pedagogical value of all this is that guidance in doing all these things for the play can be made impressive without the unwholesome reaction that often comes in the individual when the moralizing and preachments are directed toward him, in the way we are all familiar with in church-school teaching. It has the advantage which all indirect and informal education has over the direct types.

Unfortunately, the method of making up the drama in most cases is limited by the small amount of time that can be given to it. The suggestions made below will be based on the assumption that the teacher and the class may somehow find all the time that is necessary to get the best educational results in at least one

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drama. This will mean for a brief period the whole church-school time, and one or two hours a week besides.¹

Let us assume that a class of boys with a dozen members has been asked to present a ten-minute play as a part of an opening service for the church school. The teacher's task is to get the maximum motivation of all the members of the class to enter into the task and to do it well. How can this be done to the best advantage? The following will suggest what is possible for the teacher and the class to do together:

(1) Make the announcement, explain the opportunity, emphasize the situation in such a way as to get the boys to *want* to do it.

(2) Ask each boy to look through what he knows of his Bible and to talk with his parents, in an effort to pick out what would seem to him a good story to use, and then prepare himself to tell the story to the class in such a way as to convince them of its value. This will require quite a little careful work, and the class will both learn a good deal of biblical matter and get more interest in the problem by discussing the merits of the different stories. Select the story after full comparison and discussion.

¹ The somewhat more ambitious and elaborate plans of Elizabeth Erwin Miller, as described in *The Dramatization of Bible Stories*, (University of Chicago Press) were carried out through the organization of a dramatic club, which met for an hour each Sunday afternoon for a number of years. Such dramatic clubs could well be made a most valuable auxiliary of both Junior and Intermediate departments. Good leadership will insure their success under any reasonable conditions.

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(3) Assume that the *Parable of the Good Samaritan* has been selected. Let the teacher tell the story of the parable in a dramatic way, with suitable emphasis. Ask all the boys to study it during the next week, and report at the following meeting on the number of characters that ought to be provided, how many scenes or pictures ought to be arranged to bring out the sense, what should be shown in each scene and the action necessary to do this effectively, and other things of the sort that will determine the action and the dialogue. All of this will furnish further opportunity for study and discussion that will cover the conditions and setting of the incident.

(4) At this meeting, if agreement can be reached as to the characters to be represented, and similar details, any one of several effective plans might then be followed. Perhaps a good arrangement would be to give each scene to a different committee, asking each to be prepared to give a beginning of dialogue and action at the next meeting. These could meet and independently plan their scene in the interval. At least three scenes may be arranged: (a) Preparation for the journey, in which an introduction and anticipation of trouble will give expectancy; (b) the actual attack by robbers; and (c) the significant behavior of the Priest, Levite, and Samaritan.

(5) The building of the action and the dialogue is the supreme occasion for the teacher to make the incident educative. By encouraging the acting of the scenes by members of the class, by inviting criticism

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of this coupled with illustrative action by the other members, and by skilfully directed questions, the teacher can bring out all the powers of appreciation, interpretation, discrimination, and expression which the boys have. He can develop interest in all necessary geography, social customs and conditions, traits of human nature, and the like, in the simple and essential task of finding proper action and dialogue.

For example, shall we have the traveler confident of his safety, or afraid that he will be robbed? What about his friends? What kind of a conversation would they have? How would they greet one another? How can we make it most interesting and still keep it true and probable? Would a report of a robbery on the road yesterday do this? If the merchant was compelled to go alone in spite of this, the rumor would add dramatic interest. Even a little bravado on his part might help. What would his friends say on such an occasion? How would he answer? Gradually it can be made clear that the dialogue will depend on the general circumstances and on the character of the parties. The boys will enter with zest into the game of finding a suitable next speech. Even though the lines may not be so good as if an expert prepared them, it is a great loss of opportunity not to give the boys a chance to do this for themselves.

(6) During this preparatory stage, the play should be presented many times, not with memorized words, but rather spontaneously. Much shifting of the

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members to the different characters should be tried. The boys should be invited to comment on the changes brought out in these shifts. Every boy should be allowed to try his hand at several rôles.

(7) After the class has done its best, the teacher or some member of the school who has some gift in this sort of thing can, if it is thought wise, polish up the dialogue and adapt the words somewhat to the Bible style. All such changes should be submitted to the class, however. If the suggestions are really improving, the boys can be depended on to sense the fact. The effort will be good practice for them, increase their feeling of responsibility, and give a basis of comparison and estimate of their own efforts.

(8) The selection of those to present the various characters in the final performance should be democratically made by the children themselves on the basis of faithfulness and efficiency in the preliminary work and of suitability to the parts.

(9) Very little staging or costuming is necessary, though it will be found that a little attempt at both will please the young actors. It may be nothing but some straw, or a rug, or a rock; it still is an aid to the imagination. A turban or a belt or some unusual little piece of drapery to distinguish his particular character will help the boy to "feel" his part. It is better in every way, however, not to overdo the accessories.

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3. *Presenting the drama*

While the final presentation is, from one point of view, merely one of a series, nevertheless the educational value of this final occasion will not be greatest for the actors themselves unless they appreciate that they are trying to produce a state of mind on the part of the audience. This is to say that they must believe in the sincerity of the story. Every child and every word and action must be subordinated to having the audience get, through them, the purpose and effect of the story. They must feel that their success consists, not in beauty and artistic production, but in making everybody understand very clearly what it is all about. Let each of them become for the time being a preacher and an advocate through his presentation. They want to convince their audience. This is why they must enter into their part, know it, and live it very sincerely for those few minutes. That is why they must know their lines and all the other things they have learned, but will not say. All the outside things they have learned are just to help them do this one thing well.

In the interest of success in this, it seems best not to drag out too long the practice and preparation. Nothing is gained, and much of spirit is lost through "going stale." This is one advantage in the short episode over the complex one.

The educational value of these dramatizations for those children who merely see them given must not be forgotten. It is perfectly safe to say that any of

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these biblical stories will make a more lasting impression on those children who merely see and hear it given by other children than any amount of ordinary teaching would secure. The public presentation is both a good expressive device for those who play in it and a good teaching device for others.

4. *A suggestive list of Bible episodes suitable for dramatic acting or for pageants:*

The Story of the Fall and Banishment from the Garden; The Story of Cain and Abel; The Separation of Abraham and Lot; Abraham's Plea for Sodom; Abraham and Isaac; Isaac and Rebekah; The Migrations of Abraham. (This would offer the opportunity for a good spectacle illustrating the nomadic life, the migrations, the domestic customs, patriarchal customs, the educational and religious practices of these early people as portrayed in the Bible. Songs, plays, home and field life could be introduced that would give a part to people of all ages. This would require the whole end of the church, or the church-school room, if it can be opened to the auditorium, as a stage; or it might be given as a summer spectacle, out of doors); Esau and Jacob; History of Joseph; Saving the Baby Moses; The Incident of the Golden Calf; Moses pleading with Pharaoh for Israel to leave Egypt; The Spies and Canaan; The Sin of Achan; Joshua and the Gibeonites; Gideon's Exploits; The Strength and Fall of Samson; The Story of Ruth; The Call of Samuel; Samuel and David; Saul Anointed King; David and Goliath; David and Saul; David and Jonathan; Visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon; Story of Esther; Naaman the Leper; Elijah on Mount Carmel; Elijah and Elisha; Elijah and the Shunammite Woman; Elisha and

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Jezebel; The Twenty-third Psalm (Pantomime); The Story of the Birth of Jesus; "The Other Wise Man" (Van Dyke); Parable of the Good Samaritan; Parable of the Ten Virgins; Parable of the Loving Father (Prodigal Son); Parable of the Talents; Parable of the Judgment.

In "Pilgrim's Progress" are many simple scenes which may be given singly or in series: "Before the Wicket-gate," "The Palace Beautiful," "Doubting Castle," "At the Celestial Gate."

5. *Conclusion*

The writer wishes to repeat, in closing, that all this is suggested merely as a means to an end. It is believed that children have a natural inclination to play and to act; that this inclination is good, and not bad; that this impulse may be used to get the child to study the biblical stories with more purpose and emotional openness and enthusiasm than can be had in any other way. The hearty attitude will mean that he will do more work, will enter more fully into the spirit of it, will remember it better, will assimilate more of it in his life, and will have a fonder feeling for the stories because he has got real pleasure and satisfaction in connection with them. It means more labor for everybody than routine teaching requires; but it presents numerous points at which personality is more surely and more helpfully reached. We need to work for variety, interest, and efficiency in our moral and religious teaching beyond anything we have yet accomplished. This is one form of use of the "project method" in developing character.

PART II

SPECIMEN BIBLICAL DRAMAS

FOREWORD

It is the purpose in this section to give the simple dramatic treatment of a few of the shorter and longer incidents that have been actually developed and used in a church school. There is no thought that the working out of these stories is the best possible or even exemplary. They are merely offered as illustrations of what may be done in any good church school, by very busy people, and without any special organization or machinery. Of course, it does demand a few teachers who are already sympathetically alert to the needs of the children and who are consecrated to the task of meeting these needs pedagogically, and who have some imagination and ingenuity in securing the full cooperation of the children.

It is conceived that even the obvious crudities which any dramatic expert can readily find in them are an asset rather than a liability. It is important that the pedagogical end, rather than the artistic, shall be put foremost. We are striving for the motivation of study and the appreciative acceptance of truths of individual and social significance, and not merely for artistic or literary training, though the latter need not be ignored. For these ends, there is more value in making the drama than in presenting it. Presenting it in public is an additional pleasure-premium for the children which aids in motivation.

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Of course, any teacher is perfectly free to make any use of these plays that may be found possible. It is confidently believed, however, that the best possible use is for the teacher to study them merely as an aid in guiding the building up of original dramas by the class or group that is to give them. Where time is an object and division of labor is desired, an older class may dramatize an incident for a younger class. In such a case it is clearly necessary to hold the older children continually close to the pedagogical needs of the younger class.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

(Based on Luke 10 : 25-37)

BY CLARA BAKER

Scenery

ACT I. A street in Jerusalem. This may be left entirely to the imagination, or the back of the stage may be arranged with screens to represent Eastern doorways.

ACT II. The Jericho Road. This must be made as steep and rough as possible. Rocks or a slope must be simulated, against which Abiezer may recline, and from behind which the robbers may steal.

Costumes

Abiezer: Man's long robe and girdle, abba, turban, sandals, staff and scrip. May wear a conspicuous ring.

Kemuel, Elidad, Shammah: Men's long robes, white or colored, with girdle; striped abbas or long wraps; turbans or head cloths; sandals.

Priest: Man's long robe and outer wrap bound round the head, both white; white girdle and white sandals. Carries roll or parchment. Phylactery is bound on forehead.

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Levites: Men's long robes, striped abbas, turbans and sandals.

Abidan: Short, striped tunic, girdle, turban and sandals. Carries scrip.

Robbers: Short, dark-gray or brown tunics, turbans, girdles, and sandals.

Directions for Making Costumes

Men's long robe: Made like bathrobe; neck cut low in back and front; no fulness on shoulders; reaches to fett. If necessary for more freedom of motion, side seams may be opened up one third of the way from the bottom of the garment. Sleeves long and full, coming down to wrist in front, six inches longer and pointed in back. If this garment is made of striped material, stripes always go *around* the sleeves.

Men's abba: Made of cambric, twenty-seven inches wide; amount four times the length of figure from shoulder to floor, with twelve inches additional for hem. Cut into two equal pieces. Stitch two selvage edges together, making a strip one and a half yards wide and one half the original length. Fold across, thus making the shoulders without seam. Cut round opening for head, and slash nine inches down for front. Bind or face. Stitch halfway up from bottom on both sides; leave opening above for armhole. The extreme width of the garment gives the effect of sleeves. The abbas were usually striped — this effect may be obtained by sewing widths of different colored materials together.

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Men's outer wrap (used interchangeably with abba). Made of a strip of cloth about six yards in length, and a yard and a half in width. Fasten on left hip, carry up over right shoulder, over head (if desired), holding it in place by binding cord around the forehead; carry back to left hip, catching loosely there and leaving arm free; let end drop to hem of robe behind. If not carried over the head, turban or short head cloth should be worn.

Men's short tunic: Take three times the length of the figure from shoulder to six inches below the knee of material twenty-seven inches wide, and add nine inches for hem. Cut in three equal parts. Cut one part in four equal strips lengthwise. Stitch one of these strips on each edge of the other two, giving two strips of equal length, forty inches wide. Sew across one end for shoulders. Proceed for opening for head as in abba. Twelve inches down from shoulder slash nine inches in from edge to form sleeve, sloping section down to outer edge of bottom of tunic. Hem bottom of sleeves, and turn up three inches on bottom of tunic. Sew up sides of tunic and of sleeves. If a striped tunic is desired, make same as striped abba, using pieces of material not more than three inches in width. To be worn with turban and girdle. If tunic or long robe is plain in color, use striped abba, outer wrap, turban and girdle, and vice versa.

Men's girdle: Nine inches in width, and long enough to go around the waist and fasten comfortably.

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Men's turban: One and one half yards of material twenty-seven inches wide wound round the head.

Men's head-cloth: Made of a yard or more of cloth, bound round the forehead by a cord, ends touching the shoulders in the back.

Men's sandals: May be made of slipper soles or heavy leather cut in shape of foot, pierced, with thong inserted; this is brought up between first two toes and around ankle, or across foot and around heel.

Scrip or wallet: A bag of khaki or skin, slung from the shoulders by straps.

Phylactery: A case of dark leather, about two and one half inches square, bound with thongs on forehead just between the eyes.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

Abiezer, a spice merchant of Jerusalem

<i>Shammah</i>	}	Friends of Abiezer
<i>Kemuel</i>		
<i>Elidad</i>		

Abidan, a Samaritan

Priests, Levites, Robbers

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

ACT I

Jerusalem, street near city gate

SHAMMAH, KEMUEL, AND ELIDAD stand talking.

Kemuel: Yonder cometh Abiezer the merchant.

Shammah: He hath the air of one who goeth on a journey.

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Enter ABIEZER

Abiezer: Peace be unto you.

All: And upon thee peace.

Elidad: Where goest thou so early, good Abiezer?
The sun is scarcely yet above the eastern hills.

Abiezer: The day is yet young, and that is well.
For I take the Jericho road this morning, and the way is long and dusty.

Shammah: The Jericho road!

Elidad: Surely thou goest not down to Jericho alone?

Abiezer: Yea, verily. Wherefore not?

Kemuel: Hast thou not heard how Ibzau the Bethlehemite was set upon by thieves and murdered as he was coming up from Jericho? Gershom, his servant, alone escaped to bring the news. The market rang with it but yesterday!

Abiezer: Nay, I heard it not. I was not in the market yesterday. But that signifieth nothing! Belike this servant himself did slay his master, and telleth a tale of robbers to cover his own guilt. I fear not.

Elidad: Nay, my friend, I beg of thee, be not so rash. There is without doubt a band of wicked men who lurk on that lonely road! Some evil will befall thee!

Abiezer: I have my trusty staff and cudgel, and my arm is stout to wield them. Have I not traveled this road in safety many times? Yea, and even from Beersheba unto Dan. Shall ye in a moment make of me a coward?

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Shammah: But at least take thou a servant with thee.

Abiezer (impatiently): Abdul have I sent to Joppa, and Malluch hath a sickness, and the rest I cannot spare from the work to which I have set them. Prithee detain me no longer. My business is urgent and cannot wait.

Kemmuel: Stay, good Abiezer, let —

Abiezer (interrupts): Nay now, friend Kemuel, tell me the rest on my return! Farewell, and may peace remain with you.

All: May the peace of Jehovah go with thee!

Exit ABIEZER

Kemuel: I like it not. Jehovah grant him a safe return!

All shake heads doubtfully, and exeunt.

Curtain

ACT II

The Jericho road, mid-day, ABIEZER sits by wayside, eating and drinking.

Abiezer: Truly, Shammah and the rest were concerned as to my journey! "Thieves! Robbers! Murder!" they did croak, like frogs in the marshes! Thieves and robbers, indeed!

First Robber steals in from back of stage, beckoning to comrade.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Abiezer: Yea, friend Elidad, without doubt there be thieves and robbers along this way! With my own eyes I saw them — the little foxes that steal the grapes, and the cowardly jackals that flee and hide! Ha, ha, ha!

ROBBERS advance noiselessly

When I return with my purchase of spices, how I will laugh at them and their fears! Hark!

Turns, just as ROBBERS fall upon him

Help! Murder! Help!

Struggles but is soon overpowered

First Robber: There! Now is he quiet enough. Make haste, take off that robe!

Second Robber: A well-lined purse, indeed! He travel-eth well stocked with gold.

First Robber: Yea, and here is a jeweled ring. Come now, we have all that is worth the taking. The sun will make an end of him!

Exeunt ROBBERS

Curtain

ACT III

Scene: The same. ABIEZER still lies unconscious

Enter PRIEST in white robes, reading as he walks

Lev. 19 : 18; Deut. 6 : 5

Priest: Ah! What have we here? (*Draws back robes.*) Some prowling vagabond, perchance, hath met his just deserts. I will not soil my con-

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

separated robes for him. The day groweth late,
and belike he is dead already.

Exit PRIEST

Enter LEVITES

First Levite: See, yonder lieth a man, dead or dying.
Shall we not stop and see?

Second Levite: Nay, haste thee on. He is naught to
us. Let us not defile ourselves.

First Levite: I like not to leave him so. Surely I
heard him groan!

Second Levite: Thou foolish one! The hills are full of
robbers. Shall we imperil our lives for a half-
naked wretch by the wayside? Besides, our
business brooketh no delay. Come!

Exeunt LEVITES

Enter ABIDAN

Abidan: What now? A man, and in a sorry plight,
methinks (*kneels beside him*). Ah, he hath been
cruelly beaten. But there is yet life in him.

Partly raises him and gives him draught of wine.
ABIEZER opens eyes, moans.

Abidan: Good friend, thou hast been grievously
mistreated. Canst tell by whom?

Abiezer: I was set upon by robbers. They took all I
had and left me here half dead. What doest
thou?

Abidan: See, I bind up thy wounds with healing oil.
Canst take another draught of wine?

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Abiezer: May Jehovah reward thee! I lay here burning in the sun, I could not speak nor move, yet I seemed to know that other men passed by, and none would stop to give me aid. Who art thou?

Abidan: I am of the province of Samaria, and like thyself, a traveler.

Abiezer: Thou art a Samaritan! And thou hast had pity on me, who am a Jew?

Abidan: Yea, verily. For though the Jews despise the Samaritans and have no dealings with them, still thou art in sore need and trouble, and mercy is sweet to him who giveth, as to him who doth receive. Come, let me help thee to the nearest inn!

Curtain

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

(Based on Matthew 25 : 1-13)

BY FAY FISHER

SUGGESTIONS

Scenery

Scene I. Interior of Oriental House. A few Oriental rugs; a divan formed of a mattress laid on the floor and covered with a striped Bagdad and piled with brightly covered cushions; a palm or two, and any bit of brasswork.

Scene II. Interior of Oriental House. Same as Scene I, except that a general air of confusion reigns. Some fancy-work has been dropped, a garment is flung across the divan, and pillows are on the floor.

Scene III. Entrance to Oriental House. Two screens may be set at an angle across a corner of the stage and covered with light-brown paper, blocked off to represent a stone wall; an arch over the entrance, entwined with flowers and decorated with one or more brass lanterns is effective. If possible, a door should open from the platform, in the space concealed by the screens, so that the bridal procession can pass through and off the platform, without being seen again by audience.

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

Stage Properties

Oriental lamp: About four inches in length, oval in shape; a small spout at one end, a handle curving up and over on the other, usually made of pottery or silver. Pictures or models can easily be obtained. The lamps may be modeled of plasticene in dark blue or green, to represent pottery — or in any shade, and covered with silver paper to represent silver.

Costumes

Five Wise Virgins: Women's long robes, veils and sashes, white or colored; thin, flesh-colored stockings and white sandals. Colors should be delicate, and great attention paid to details.

Five Foolish Virgins: Same as Wise Virgins, except that the colors are gaudy, the whole effect untidy.

Other Maidens in Bridal Procession: Costumes same as above.

Directions for Making Costumes

Women's robe: Made like a kimono, reaching to the feet. Sleeves long and full, covering half the hand in front, six inches longer in the back, coming to a point. Amount needed, about seven yards of material twenty-seven inches wide, six yards thirty-six inches wide.

Women's veil: One yard wide, two or more yards long; sometimes caught in a little at the back of the head; often reaching to the bottom of the dress.

Women's sash: Nine inches in width, and long enough to knot on left side, with hanging ends.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Women's sandals: The soles of bedroom slippers, pierced and laced over foot with white thongs; or white barefoot sandals; thin, flesh-colored stockings.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

<i>Mary</i>	} Wise Virgins	<i>Tirzah</i>	} Foolish Virgins
<i>Elizabeth</i>		<i>Martha</i>	
<i>Philippa</i>		<i>Esther</i>	
<i>Huldah</i>		<i>Salome</i>	
<i>Leah</i>		<i>Ruth</i>	

Other Maidens in Bridal Procession.

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

In One Act

Scene 1

Bethlehem. A house interior — neat and well arranged.

The five WISE VIRGINS are discovered putting the finishing touches on one another's costumes, and, later, filling their lamps with oil.

Leah: It is well that we are early, in order that we may be in good time to walk in the bridal procession.

Huldah: It is well, yet I had a temptation to finish the weaving I had begun this afternoon. The design fascinated me, and I was loath to leave it. But I took thought for you others, and made myself ready.

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

Mary: Unselfish Huldah! Always she taketh thought for the others.

Huldah: Thou praiseth me too much, dear.

Leah (smiling): Sisters, contend not over the matter, but let us fill our lamps and be on our way.

Elizabeth: But need we fill our lamps before starting? Surely we may find oil there. Yet — prudence — (*breaks off, undecided*).

Philippa (quickly and impatiently): Ay, prudence! Always prudence! Why should we burden ourselves when it is not needful?

Mary: But were it not better, dear, to bear the slight burden, than to cause trouble and vexation perhaps, for some other, who must provide us with oil?

Leah: It is possible, too, that we might not be able to get oil there. Come, let us bear it with us.

Huldah: Ay, let us bear it along.

Philippa: If ye wish it, I will be content.

They busy themselves in bringing the lamps and filling them, then file out, each bearing her lamp.

Curtain

Scene 2

Another house interior in Bethlehem. Rather slovenly and in confusion. Three FOOLISH VIRGINS are discovered. TIRZAH and ESTHER are making themselves ready in leisurely manner, (L) and MARTHA, (R) is busied with some hand-work.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Tirzah: Is it not time, Martha, that thou shouldst make thyself ready?

Esther: Urge her not to haste, Tirzah.

Martha (with a little frown): I like not leaving my work. It fascinates me. I will not go until I must.

Tirzah: It is true, we need not hasten. Salome and Ruth will assuredly wait for us in the next street, if we come not to our meeting-place at the appointed time.

Martha: Ay, and surely the bridal procession will await our coming.

ESTHER who has gone to the back of the stage while PRISCILLA and MARTHA speak, stands at door in listening attitude.

Esther: Hark! (cymbals). (*Rushes forward to grasp MARTHA's veil and force it on her.*) Sisters, it is the cymbals of the bridal procession that I hear. Oh, let us hasten, hasten!

Tirzah (who has taken ESTHER's place at door): Ah! I can see the glare of the torches! Haste, haste!

Martha (rising in confusion and trying to adjust her veil): Our lamps! Where are they?

Stands helplessly, while TIRZAH rushes out after them.

Tirzah: I will find them.

Esther (in great haste and excitement): And oil! Shall we take oil?

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

They stand parleying on threshold. ESTHER has hand on door, is on point of departure.

Martha: I know not whether we have oil here. We had not taken thought of that. But we have no time now. Why burden ourselves with it?

Esther: Ay, they may easily provide us oil there. It will be given us. Why burden ourselves? Let us be off! We must meet Ruth and Salome.

They start.

Tirzah (pokes head in at door): I have at last found three old lamps. One is cracked, but it must serve. We need take no oil. Come! I fear we will not meet Salome and Ruth.

Exeunt

Scene 3

Singing behind scenes before curtain rises; double mixed quartet. When curtain rises, the procession is singing the closing lines, supported by quartet behind scenes.

(Sung to the tune of "Jerusalem" by Henry Parker)

Behold the bridegroom cometh
Along the torchlit way,
With joy he leadeth homeward
A lovely bride this day.
Then let our shout triumphant

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Be heard the hills along,
Come all ye friends who love them
And welcome them with song!
Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!

Bridegroom, now as we meet thee,
Sing we hosanna,
Bride, now as we greet thee,
Welcome home!
Bridegroom, now as we meet thee,
Sing we hosanna,
Bride, now as we greet thee,
Welcome to thy home!

Scene: House entrance of bridegroom in same town.

A crowd of VIRGINS, as many as desired, may be passing in procession on to the stage (R) and off through the supposed house entrance, with five WISE VIRGINS foremost. ESTHER, MARTHA, and TIRZAH, on the outskirts, single out two other girls also on the outskirts, but apart from the first three, RUTH and SALOME. The five come forward and form a group while the others pass in.

Ruth: At last we have found you! Why came ye not to the meeting-place? We tired of waiting and passed on.

Tirzah: We were late, and must needs hasten in order to walk in the procession. We had no oil, and our lamps burned not. Had ye oil?

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

Salome: Nay, we brought none, and *our* lamps burned not.

Esther: But oil will be provided us.

Martha: Come, let us go in and slumber until the bridegroom cometh: I am weary of all this haste and confusion.

The others: Ay, let us go in.

They turn in direction of door.

Curtain

Scene 4

Same as Scene 3

Just before rise of curtain a loud cry is heard behind the scenes, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him." As curtain rises, VIRGINS are seen trimming lamps and making ready to go. WISE and FOOLISH VIRGINS in separate groups in foreground, WISE at right, FOOLISH left.

Esther: Whence shall we procure oil? Oil we must have.

Tirzah: Let us ask the maidens there. I have seen that they have abundance of oil.

Ruth (quickly): Ay! Ask, Tirzah.

TIRZAH and RUTH, followed closely by the other three, advance to WISE VIRGINS.

Tirzah: I pray ye, give us of your oil, for we have none.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Ruth (eagerly seconding Tirzah): And our lamps must be burning when the bridegroom cometh.

The WISE VIRGINS look at one another questioningly, and appear to consult over the matter. At last LEAH steps forward.

Leah: Nay, we may not give you of our oil, for we have not enough for ourselves and you.

Martha: But give, we pray you.

Mary (sadly): Alas! We may not give.

Philippa: Sisters, we must go, for the bridegroom is come.

The WISE VIRGINS pass in.

Salome: What now? We have no oil. There is no time to go and buy it.

Esther: No oil, and we may not go in to the marriage! They that were ready have gone in, and the door is shut.

The others: Alas! Woe is me!

Ruth: Despair not. Perchance we may enter though our lamps burn not.

Tirzah: Ay. Come, Ruth, go we to importune the doorkeeper. (*To the three others.*) Remain ye here.

ESTHER, SALOME and MARTHA listen anxiously.

RUTH and TIRZAH may be heard behind the scenes.

Ruth: Lord, I pray thee, let us pass in. We are invited guests.

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

Tirzah: And have delayed only for that our lamps
burned not. Open unto us.

Doorkeeper: The marriage is begun, and I know you
not.

Ruth: But open unto us.

Doorkeeper: Nay. (*Weeping and wailing — and
gnashing of teeth if desired — from three on stage.*

RUTH and TIRZAH return.)

Tirzah: We may not enter. We must turn away.

Martha (cries out bitterly): Oh, why brought we not
oil in our lamps!

THE CHILD MOSES

(Based on Exodus 2 : 1-10)

BY CLARA BAKER

SUGGESTIONS

Scenery

ACT I. Interior of Oriental House. Rugs on floor, shabby. Divan formed by mattress laid on floor, covered with dark shawl. Pillows. Chest at one side, set out a little from wall.

ACT II. *Scene 1.*

Light dim. Bank of Nile — a gentle incline. (Boards covered with green crêpe paper with undulating grassy effect may be utilized.) Bulrushes with long pointed leaves fashioned from dark green crêpe paper, stems stuck in bank; intermingled with brown cattails if these are obtainable. Several palms intermingled, with the tubs in which they stand hidden by bulrushes. The bank must be so arranged (as regards position) that Moses may be hidden behind it. Ark of bulrushes; a large oblong basket without handles, woven of broad splints stained dark green and *thickly* varnished, to represent pitch: cushioned on the inside.

Scene 2.

Same as Scene 1, with brighter light.

THE CHILD MOSES

Costumes

The Mother of Moses: Women's robe, veil, sash, and sandals.

Miriam: White tunic, sash, thin, flesh-colored stockings, white sandals.

Moses: In Jewish swaddling clothes.

The Princess: Women's robes, purple, very rich; embroidered sash and veil; thin, flesh-colored stockings and white sandals; chains around neck, coins across forehead, heavy bracelets.

Ladies-in-waiting to the Princess: Women's robes, sash, veil and sandals; less sumptuous than the Princess' but gorgeous in coloring and ornamentation.

Directions for Making Costumes

Women's robe, veil, sash and sandals: As described in THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS.

Girl's tunic: Measure three times the length of figure from shoulder to six inches below the knee of material twenty-seven inches wide, and add nine inches for hem. Cut in three equal parts. Cut one part in four equal strips lengthwise, stitch one of these strips on each edge of the other two, giving two strips of equal length forty inches wide. Sew across one end for shoulders. Cut round opening for head. Cut nine inches down from front of opening for head, and bind or face. Twelve inches down from the shoulder, slash nine inches in from the edge to form

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

sleeve, sloping section down to outer edge of bottom of tunic. Hem bottom of sleeves and turn up three inches on bottom of tunic. Stitch up sides of tunic and of sleeves.

Girl's sash and sandals: Like women's sash and sandals in preceding play, **THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS.**

Infant's Swaddling Band: The babe is laid diagonally on a piece of white cloth a yard square; one corner is turned under its head, one over its feet, and two over its body. The whole is then fastened by bands about five inches wide and five yards long, starting under the left arm and wound around and around, confining arms and whole body, and tied in knot to make firm.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

Moses, a child three months old.

The Mother of Moses.

Miriam, sister to Moses.

The Princess, Daughter of Pharaoh, Ruler of Egypt.

Iris

Masanath

Nari, and others

} Ladies-in-waiting to the Princess.

THE CHILD MOSES

ACT I

Interior of humble Hebrew dwelling. MOTHER seated, with child.

Mother: Hush, my son, my little one! Sleep, sleep, sleep! *She trots him on her knees and hums softly.*

THE CHILD MOSES

Now thou art quiet at last. Oh, my precious one, how shall I save thee from the cruel Egyptians? 'Twas an evil day for Israel when Pharaoh decreed that every man-child of the Hebrews should be drowned in the Nile!

Enter MIRIAM in great excitement. Noise of tramping behind the scenes.

Miriam: Mother! The soldiers are coming!

MOTHER starts up, dropping a little garment in her haste, and conceals the CHILD behind a chest.

MIRIAM sees and snatches up the garment.

Miriam: Here, this too!

MOTHER hides it also, and both glance hastily about to be sure that no other telltale thing is in sight.

Miriam: O mother, is he asleep?

Mother: Yea, Jehovah be thanked! Pray, Miriam, pray that he waken not, nor cry!

Both stand listening, tense with anxiety.

Mother: Jehovah grant that they come not in!

Miriam: Surely they are going by, the noise grows fainter!

MIRIAM tiptoes to door, peeps out, runs back joyously.

Miriam: Be glad, mother! They are gone. He is safe!

MOTHER lifts child out and gazes at him sadly.

Mother: Safe, Miriam! Ah no, never safe. Some day, little daughter, they will not pass by. Some

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

day they will find him. And thy father, far away, toiling under cruel taskmasters, will never see his beloved son!

Drops into chair and hides face in hands.

MIRIAM, *distressed, kneels at her side.*

Miriam: But, mother, I will watch, oh, so faithfully! Surely we can hide him — for three months now we have kept him safe!

Mother: Yea, but he groweth strong and crieth lustily. See now, Miriam, dost thou not remember how he wailed and fretted even now, as I tried to soothe him to sleep? Had they chanced to pass but a little sooner, they must assuredly have heard him. Only yesterday they snatched the son of Adah from her very arms, and she has been careful as have we!

Miriam: Oh, what shall we do? Will no one help us?

Mother: There is none to help us but Jehovah, God of Israel. Come, let us beseech him again that he will show us a way to save our little one!

MOTHER, *still holding CHILD, slips to her knees, and MIRIAM bows head and clasps her hands in attitude of prayer.*

Curtain

ACT II. *Scene 1.*

Daybreak; a secluded spot on the banks of the Nile.

Enter MOTHER carrying CHILD, and MIRIAM with the ark of bulrushes.

THE CHILD MOSES

Mother: This is the place. Here the princess cometh in the mornings to bathe.

Miriam: Art thou sure?

Mother: Yea, I have been often told that it is a deep pool by yonder twisted palm tree.

Miriam: How clear and still the water is!

Mother: And how thick the rushes grow! Lay the ark here among them, daughter. And see, behind yonder thick clump is the place for thee to wait.

Miriam (half-sobbing as she lays basket down): Oh, I am sore afraid to leave him here! Mayhap the Princess will not come, or if she cometh she may not be kind.

As MIRIAM speaks, the MOTHER kneels on one knee and arranges the CHILD's clothing preparatory to placing him in the basket.

Mother: They say she is gentle and gracious, and she hath indeed a kindly face. I saw her once. Moreover, she hath but to look at him, to know that he is a goodly child! Only, do thou be patient, and say what I have told thee.

Miriam: But there may come a poison serpent, or a crocodile!

Kisses CHILD and holds him close for a second, then lays him gently in the ark, pushes it out a little way from the bank, and rises before she speaks.

Mother: We are in Jehovah's hand, my Miriam! Did

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

we not pray him long and earnestly? And shall I doubt that my dream was indeed from him?

Clasps hands and raises her eyes to the sky.

I know that he will not forsake us! The God of our fathers will save my son!

Curtain

Scene 2

Place: the same. Time: some hours later. MIRIAM is crouched among the rushes. Enter IRIS and MASANATH, and stroll idly up and down.

Iris: The princess is late this morning.

Masanath: Doubtless some one hath delayed her with a tale of woe, and thou knowest she is ever ready to listen.

Iris: Truly she is a gracious mistress (*stops suddenly to listen*). I thought I heard —

Masanath: What?

Iris: I know not what it could have been — a faint sound — like a child.

Masanath: I heard nothing. Ah, yonder cometh our lady!

Enter PRINCESS, with NARI and other maidens. IRIS and MASANATH kneel. She motions them to rise.

Princess: Ah, Masanath, Iris, I have kept you waiting. Now we will make haste. The water looketh cool and refreshing.

Unloose my sandals, Nari. *Nari kneels to obey.*

THE CHILD MOSES

Iris: There it is again! (*Turns to Masanath.*) Dost hear it not?

Princess: What dost thou hear?

Iris: Only hearken, my lady. (*All stand listening.*)
There! Doth it not sound like a child crying?

Nari (still kneeling): Why, it is a child crying!
Where can it be?

Princess: Go and search quickly, all of you! How should a child be here? This is my private place, no one cometh here but myself and my maidens!

At her first words the GIRLS scatter and search up and down the bank.

Masanath (parting rushes which conceal the ark):
Behold, O princess, here is a babe, afloat in an ark woven of bulrushes!

Princess (hastening to the spot): Fetch it hither, Masanath.

(All watch eagerly while MASANATH wades in a few steps and brings the ark out.)

Princess (lifts CHILD out, and cuddles him): Come, thou little one, now do not weep. Is he not a proper child? See how plump and strong he is! There, there! (*Handles him tenderly.*) See, now he smileth at me! He is quite young. Who can have left him here?

Iris: Some one who loved him, it is plain. See how his garments are wrought with cunning needle-work! And how cleverly this is fashioned, to keep him dry! (*Holds up ark.*)

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Princess: This must be one of the Hebrews' children.
Thinkest thou not so, Masanath?

Masanath: Yes, my lady, I have heard that there is great distress amongst them because of the edict of Pharaoh.

Princess: It is indeed a cruel decree, that every man-child of the Hebrews shall be slain. In vain have I pleaded with my father to revoke it. But I will save this child at least. See how he clutcheth at my hand!

Nari: Thou hast a tender heart, O princess!

Iris: But surely we shall need a nurse for him.

Masanath: Look, is not this a Hebrew girl?

All turn, to see MIRIAM timidly approaching.

Princess: Speak, child, be not afraid.

Miriam (kneeling): O gracious lady, shall I not go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

Princess: Yea, go.

MIRIAM darts off. The PRINCESS looks after her and smiles.

Now all is plain. They have counted on my compassion, have they not?

Nari: Yea, doubtless she hath waited all the morning to see what would be done to him.

Iris: She must have been hidden yonder. Strange we did not see her.

Princess: The child claimed all our eyes. (*Lifts a locket which hangs about her neck and dangles it before the CHILD to amuse him.*) Aha, thou

THE CHILD MOSES

lovest things that glitter, dost thou not! Sec,
I will call thy name Moses, because I drew thee
out of the water.

Nari: Here cometh the maid again, and a woman
with her.

Masanath: His mother, belike!

Enter MIRIAM and her MOTHER. Both kneel.

Princess: Rise, and fear not!

*(She steps forward and lays CHILD in the
MOTHER'S arms.)*

Woman, take thou this child away; nurse him
with all loving care, and I will give thee thy
wages. When he is grown enough, bring him
unto me, and he shall be as my son. This is my
signet, — let it be a token to all who would do
him harm.

*Takes locket from her neck and clasps it on the
CHILD'S.*

Mother: O princess, I and mine are servants unto
thee forever! May the Lord Jehovah bless thee
most abundantly and reward thee all the days of
thy life!

Princess: Nay, thank me not. He is a goodly child.
It were a pity to let him perish. We will teach
him all the learning of the Egyptians, and, who
knoweth, mayhap he may prove a deliverer for
thy people!

(To her MAIDENS.) Come, we will return now
to the palace.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Mother: Jehovah will bless thee, for thou hast had pity on them who are oppressed!

Exeunt PRINCESS and MAIDENS.

MOTHER, CHILD, and MIRIAM take center of stage.

Miriam: O mother, thy dream, thy dream, — it is all come true! He is safe now, we shall not need to hide him more!

MOTHER, clasping CHILD close, draws MIRIAM to her and gazes upward with joyful reverence.

Mother: I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord! In my affliction I cried unto him, and he hath answered my cry. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah his God!

Curtain

NAAMAN'S QUEST

(Based on 2 Kings 5 : 1-19)

BY A CLASS OF GIRLS

SUGGESTIONS

Scenery

- ACT I. Interior of Naaman's House in Damascus. Richly furnished. Oriental rugs and palms. One or two divans, formed by mattress laid on floor, covered with striped Bagdad and piled with cushions. Some pieces of brass-work; an open-work swinging lantern, if possible.
- ACT II. King Joram's Palace in Samaria. Rich rugs; a platform at one end covered with rugs, on which stands an armchair, gorgeously draped for the king's throne.
- ACT III and ACT IV. Door of Elisha's House. A door leading from platform, if possible; wall around should be covered with paper laid off to simulate outside of Oriental house. A simple arch should be constructed over door and lantern hung therefrom.

Obeisance

The arms are folded on the chest, and, with head well up and knees perfectly stiff, the body is bent straight forward from the hips.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Costumes

Naaman: In Act I,—Men's short tunic, *gorgeous*; girdle and sandals. In Acts II and III,—Armor.

King Joram: Men's long, full robe of royal purple, crown and scepter of gold.

Elisha: Men's long robe (white), girdle, outer wrap, short head-dress, sandals.

Zahra: Women's long robe (orange), veil, sash, flesh-colored stockings, white sandals, much jewelry.

Tirzah: Girl's tunic (white), striped sash, thin, flesh-colored stockings, white sandals.

Servants to Joram, and Naaman: Men's short tunics (dark red, blue, and green), turbans, girdles, and sandals.

Messengers to Joram, Naaman, and Elisha: Men's short tunics (gray, brown, or tan), bright girdles and turbans, dark sandals, staffs.

Cupbearer to Joram: Men's short tunic (striped red and green), red girdle and turban, dark sandals; carries silver tray and goblets.

Guards in Joram's Court: Armor.

Amariah and Gehazi: Men's long robes, striped abbas, headcloths bound with thongs, dark sandals.

Directions for Making Costumes

Men's short tunic: As described in play, **THE GOOD SAMARITAN**.

Men's long, full robe: Like men's long robe described

NAAMAN'S QUEST

in play **THE GOOD SAMARITAN**, except that fulness is plaited in on shoulders and in back.

King's crown: Made of pasteboard and covered with gold paper.

King's scepter: A slender wand, wound smoothly with gold paper.

Men's long robe, outer wrap, abba, turban, short head-dress, girdle and sandals: As described in play, **THE GOOD SAMARITAN**.

Women's long robe, veil, sash, and sandals: As described in play, **THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS**.

Girl's tunic: As described in play **THE CHILD MOSES**.

Girl's sash and sandals : Like women's.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

Naaman, captain of the Syrian army, but a leper.

Joram, king of Israel.

Elisha, the prophet of God.

Zahra, Naaman's wife.

Tirzah, a Hebrew maiden, taken captive by the Syrians — a servant to Zahra.

Servant to Naaman.

Messenger to Naaman.

Amariah, counselor to Joram.

Guards in Joram's Court.

Rehun, servant to Joram.

Cupbearer to Joram.

Messenger to Joram.

Gehazi, servant to Elisha.

Messenger to Elisha.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

NAAMAN'S QUEST

ACT I

DAMASCUS — A HOUSE INTERIOR

Tirzah (arranging the pillows on the divan): How long a time it seemeth since first these Syrians brought me here! And yet I remember it all as if it were but yesterday. What a quiet, peaceful night it was, and how happy were we all, for we expected my elder brother home from the battles! Suddenly we were awakened by the shouts of men, the tramp of horses' feet, the crying of women and children — there was noise and confusion everywhere. I was torn away from my loved ones — Oh, would that I might see them once again, if only once! Then came the long journey to Damascus, the hard ride, the hot sun, the cruel soldiers; but now must I be happy, for my master and mistress are good. Therefore must I not mourn.

Enter ZAHRA. TIRZAH bows and remains standing. ZAHRA reclines on divan.

Zahra: Ah, Tirzah, little thou knowest how sad I am. Thou hast always been happy, hast thou not, my little maid?

Tirzah: Nay, for I am sad when thou art sad. But why art thou so unhappy, my mistress?

Zahra: Dost thou not know? Hast thou not heard? Naaman hath the leprosy!

NAAMAN'S QUEST

Tirzah: Thou canst not mean it! My master is a leper? Nay, it cannot be!

Zahra: It is but too true. He will have to leave the city and live among the outcasts, among the accursed of the gods!

Tirzah: Restrain thyself, my mistress. When my master cometh in, he will wish to see thee happy.

Zahra: Nay, I cannot be happy, Tirzah, and yet I must seem so when he cometh.

Tirzah: Would God my lord were in Samaria, with Elisha, the prophet of God who dwelleth there! For he would cure him of the leprosy!

Zahra: There is no cure for leprosy, my child.

Tirzah: Thou mayest not think so, O my mistress, but this man, of all men in the world, can cure him, through Jehovah, God of Israel.

Zahra: Dost thou say, O Tirzah, that there is a man in *thy* land who can do this great work?

Tirzah: Yea, my mistress. Well I remember him. He was used to pass through our village, and sometimes he would stop at our house.

Zahra: O Tirzah, if only it were true!

Enter NAAMAN.

Naaman, I have somewhat to tell thee. My little Tirzah saith that there is a prophet in Israel who can recover thee of thy disease. Dost think it can be true?

Naaman: Nay, it is but child's prattle. There is none who can do that. I have had the greatest healer in our kingdom.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Tirzah: My lord, he doth not heal as do your healers. He is a man of God, who healeth in the name of Jehovah. When I was a very little girl, he would come to our village. The sick crowded the streets and he healed them. I saw these miracles myself.

Naaman: I believe not that he could do this. The God of the Jews is no more powerful than Rimmon. Thou art a contrary little maiden, Tirzah, to insist on worshiping thy God when thou art out of the country over which he ruleth.

Tirzah: He ruleth over the Syrians as well as over the Jews.

Naaman: What thinkest thou, Zahra? The Hebrews are a superstitious people. Is it not some fancy that lingereth in the little maiden's mind?

Zahra: I beg thee, go, Naaman. Think of thy king and thy country. Thou knowest well 'tis thou who hast these many times saved the hosts of Syria from the hands of the enemy. And think of me, — if thou diest, I die.

Tirzah: Go, my lord, and thou shalt be made clean of the disease.

Naaman: I would I might lead my army again. To feel the spear at my side, and to hear the sound of battle, and the noise of chariots! (*To TIRZAH.*) It cannot be that thou rememberest rightly.

Tirzah: I remember well. There was a woman who lived not far from us, and one of her arms was useless. One time when the man of God was in

NAAMAN'S QUEST

our village, she went to him and implored of him that he would cure it. This he did, and it was good as was the other. She told my mother of the miracle. And others were cured as wonderfully as she!

Naaman: Truly, that were the power of a God greater than the gods of Syria!

Tirzah: My lord, it is true. If thou couldst only talk with this man of God, thou wouldst never worship more at Rimmon's altar. He telleth how Jehovah loveth every one, is merciful and kind, and is God of all the world, not only of our land. When the prophet entereth the village, all the people, even the little children, hasten to receive from him his blessing, for they all love him.

Naaman: Surely, he is a wonderful man, if all this be true.

Zahra: Naaman, I sometimes wonder if this little maid may not be right about their God, for thou knowest Rimmon is a cruel god, and her Jehovah, — I could love him!

Naaman: Thou must not talk in that way, and yet — ah, well — What is this man's name, Tirzah?

Tirzah: He is called Elisha.

Zahra: If only thou wouldst go, Naaman. Thou knowest that the Jews have many ancient secrets in their keeping, and perhaps they have some knowledge of healing which we know not of.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Naaman: I wish I might believe 'twere true. It would hurt nothing should I go to the land of Israel, and seek this man. (*He thinks a moment.*) Tomorrow will I go to my lord, the king, and gain permission to set out upon this quest. Then will I journey to Joram, king of Israel, and he will direct me to this man.

Zahra: Thou *must* be cured! Thou *wilt* be cured! By my very longing I could almost make thee well!

Tirzah (joyously): My master dear, indeed thou wilt be cured!

Curtain

ACT II

Palace of the King of Israel. KING JORAM surrounded by his court.

Cupbearer (with low obeisance): Wilt thou have thy wine, my lord?

Joram: Nay, take it away.

Exit CUPBEARER

(*To SERVANT*): Ho, Rehum, send the counselor, Amariah, here.

Rehum (with low obeisance): Yea, my lord.

Exit REHUM

Joram: I like it not — this raiding by the Syrians. Four towns sacked last week.

Enter REHUM with AMARIAH

NAAMAN'S QUEST

Amariah (with low obeisance): Thou didst call for me, my lord?

Joram: Yea, I called for thee. What thinkest thou of these happenings on our northern border?

Amariah: I think, my lord, thou and thy land are both disgraced. Thy father, Ahab, drove these Syrians hence. Since thy accession to the throne, they have returned in all their power, and harried this country more than ever they did before. I would we had an army worthy of the name.

Enter SERVANT and MESSENGER

Servant (with low obeisance): A messenger for the king.

Joram: What wilt thou?

Messenger (with low obeisance): O king, live forever! I come from Naaman, captain of the hosts of Syria, who wisheth to speak with thee on a matter of peace.

Joram (to Amariah): Captain of the hosts of Syria! We needs must give him audience.

(To MESSENGER): Tell Naaman we await him.

(Exit MESSENGER)

Joram: Dost thou think it is an errand of peace on which he cometh?

Amariah: I know not that, but 'twill do no harm to hear what word he bringeth. I know of him well. He is the greatest captain of the Syrian hosts for lo, these many years.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Joram: I would I could make peace with Syria's king! His hosts are strong, and mine are weak. I know not what will come of it.

Enter MESSENGER

Servant (with low obeisance): Naaman, captain of the hosts of Syria.

Enter NAAMAN, with SERVANTS

Joram: Thou art welcome. What wilt thou?

Naaman: Benhadad, king of Syria, to Joram, king of Israel, greeting. I bring a letter from my master.

He hands it to Amariah.

Joram: Read thou the letter.

Amariah (reading): Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman, my servant, to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

Joram: What? Cure him of the leprosy! Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?

(To Amariah): Wherefore consider, I pray thee, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

Amariah: I cannot tell. He seemeth to be seeking a quarrel, and yet perhaps he thinketh we have some art whereby the leprosy may be cured.

Joram: Nay, nay! It is a plot against me! I will have him seized!

Amariah: Be not rash, my lord.

NAAMAN'S QUEST

Naaman (to a SOLDIER who is with him): Seest thou how he keepeth me waiting? He wisheth not to do me this favor.

Servant: Mayhap he knoweth not who can do this deed.

Enter SERVANT

Servant (with low obeisance): A messenger for my lord, the king.

Joram: Bid him enter.

Enter MESSENGER

Joram: What wilt thou?

Messenger: I am from Elisha, the prophet, who sayeth, "Let Naaman now come to me, and he shall know there is a prophet in Israel."

Joram (to NAAMAN): Dost thou hear?

Naaman (with awe): Yea, my lord. It is this man whom I seek. To him I go.

Joram (to MESSENGER): Tell thy master Naaman will come.

Exeunt NAAMAN, accompanied by SERVANTS and MESSENGER from Elisha.

Curtain

ACT III

Doorway of Elisha's House.

Naaman: Is this the dwelling-place of Elisha, the prophet?

Messenger (with obeisance): Yea, my lord.

Naaman: What thinkest thou? Can this prophet of thy God cure me of the leprosy?

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Messenger: He can, my lord. More than once have I seen him do such wonders.

Naaman: I understand not. How cometh this cure without herbs or medicine?

Messenger: It is through faith in Jehovah, God of Israel.

Enter GEHAZI, from house

Naaman: Comest thou from Elisha?

Gehazi: I do, my lord. He hath sent me to thee, saying, "Go, and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean."

Naaman (impatiently): Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of Jehovah, his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?

Messenger: Nay, did I not tell thee that thy recovery would be through faith?

Naaman: I have no faith in such a cure as that.

Servant of Naaman: My master, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, "Wash and be thou clean."

Naaman: Why should I go? He is only mocking me.

Gehazi: He is *not* mocking thee. Go; and thou shalt have known a miracle.

NAAMAN'S QUEST

Naaman: A miracle, — through bathing in the Jordan!

Servant: Nay, my lord, but go. This thing cannot harm. Mayhap it may cure.

Naaman: I would go if I thought it might cure me.

Servant to Naaman: Remember thy king and thy country. For if thou be not cured, who will lead the hosts of Syria on to victory?

Second Servant to Naaman: Remember Zahra, thy wife. Thou knowest well her life is bound in thine.

Naaman: For my king, my country, and my wife, I go. If I be cured, then will I know that the God of Israel is God indeed.

Curtain

ACT IV

Scene: Same as Act III.

Naaman: I am cured! The leprosy is gone from me! Behold, thou art a true prophet of the true God, for now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but the God of Israel. Now, therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing from thy servant for this great good which thou hast done. (Offers gifts to Elisha.)

Elisha: As Jehovah liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing. I did it not for gold and jewels and fine raiment.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Naaman: But surely thou wilt receive this from the hands of him for whom thou hast worked this miracle?

Elisha: It is Jehovah's deed, and to Jehovah be the glory. I will receive nothing.

Naaman: But think, — thou couldst do many things with that which I would give thee. Thou couldst feed and clothe the poor.

Elisha (interrupting): Thou needst not urge me more. My God doth not desire that I do good for pay, and I take it not. I have the wherewithal to feed men's souls. I would I might feed their bodies also — but not with that which might be gained through the miracles which Jehovah doeth through me. But when thou reachest thy home, give thou these things to the poor of thine own city.

Naaman (to Elisha): That will thy servant do. Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth from the land of Jehovah? In Damascus will I build an altar to his name. For thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto Jehovah.

Elisha: Thou needest not this load of earth to build a shrine for him, for Jehovah's altar is in every loyal heart. Yet take the earth, and take my blessing with it. Thou shalt prosper in thy land for this thing which thou hast done. For Jehovah doth give his servants blessing.

NAAMAN'S QUEST

Naaman: In this thing pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the House of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the House of Rimmon: when I bow myself in the House of Rimmon, Jehovah pardon thy servant in this thing. For I will not worship Rimmon in my heart, only must I do this thing for my king.

Elisha: Jehovah will pardon thee for that, if only thou worship him in thy heart.

Naaman: For this great favor do I thank Jehovah and the prophet of Jehovah.

Elisha (arms outstretched): The blessing of Jehovah be upon thee. Go in peace.

Curtain

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

Based on Genesis, Chapters 37 and 41-45, inclusive

By a Committee composed of

CLARA M. BAKER, ESTELLA E. BRYANT, ANNE M. BOYD,
HENRIETTA P. ECKHARD, AND A CLASS OF BOYS.

SUGGESTIONS

Appropriate music behind the scenes may be used between acts. It doubtless adds to the emotional and artistic appeal.

The number of strictly necessary characters is seventeen, but if desired more may easily be utilized as guards, attendants, etc. If the number must be limited, some of those acting as the twelve sons of Israel may also appear, with slight changes of costume, as officers and wise-men of Pharaoh's court in Act II. Joseph, in Acts II and IV, should have at least two attendants besides the steward. The play was prepared for boys of high-school age, and may prove too difficult for those much younger.

Scenery

ACT I. *Scene 1.* Hebron. Tent of Israel, which occupies the whole stage; several divans, covered with striped Bagdads and cushions; if obtain-

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able, a bag made of sheepskin (like an oriental water-bag) hanging on the wall and a bunch of staffs and crooks leaning up in one corner.

Scenes 2 and 3. The Plain of Dothan, which occupies the whole stage. The floor should be strewn with sand, and the back of the stage hung with dark-green paper to simulate a landscape. The doorway through which Joseph is dragged to the pit should in some way be covered to give an effect of natural exit.

ACT II. *Scene 1.* Egypt. Palace of Pharaoh. Oriental rugs on floor, a small movable platform or dais covered with rugs at back of stage, on which stands an armchair gorgeously draped for king's throne.

ACT III. *Scene 1.* Egypt, Palace of Joseph. Like Pharaoh's palace in Act II, without throne.

Scene 2. Hebron. Tent of Israel. Like Act I, Scene 1.

ACT IV. Egypt, Palace of Joseph, like Act III, Scene 1, with the addition of a richly covered divan.

Costumes

Pharaoh: Men's long, full robe, crown and scepter, sash and sandals. Should be richly adorned, and have a ring and conspicuous gold chain to bestow on Joseph.

Israel: Men's long, full robes, dark in color, black sash, turban, and sandals. Has a long flowing white beard and carries a staff.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Joseph: In Act I and in Act II when he makes his first appearance before Pharaoh his costume is like his brothers; man's short tunic, with "coat of many colors." In Act III and Act IV men's long, full, flowing robe, less magnificent than Pharaoh's but sufficiently resplendent to show high rank and dignity; a gilt band around the head. The ring and chain should be worn, and the addition of a beard would help to indicate the years that had passed since his brothers sold him into Egypt.

Eleven Sons of Israel: Men's short tunics of gray, tan or brown material, with turbans and girdles of some bright color; sandals. In Act IV they carry gunny sacks filled with straw or excelsior.

Butler to Pharaoh: Men's short tunic gaily striped, with girdle and turban of some plain color; sandals. Should carry silver tray and goblets.

Guards to Pharaoh's Court: Men's short tunics in light silver gray; helmets, shields, swords, or spears. Sandals covered with silver paper.

Steward to Joseph: Man's long tunic gaily striped, with girdle and turban of some plain color; sandals.

Magicians or Wise-men: Long, full robes of rich colors; gay turbans; sandals. They wear long beards and carry rolls of parchment.

Servants to Pharaoh and to Joseph: Men's short, dark tunics, striped turbans and girdles, sandals.

Two methods of salutation are made use of, the simple bow and the prostration. The first is used in

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

the scenes between Israel and his sons, and by the servants of Pharaoh and Joseph. To make the bow, the arms are folded on the chest, and with head well up and knees perfectly stiff the body is bent straight forward from the hips. The prostration signifies humble respect and abasement, as when the brothers come into the presence of Joseph. First kneel, then place the hands palm down on the floor in front, and lastly touch the forehead to the floor between the hands.

Directions for Making Costumes

Men's long full robe, King's crown and scepter: As described in play NAAMAN'S QUEST.

Men's girdle, turban, and sandals: As described in play, THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Men's short tunic: As described in play, THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Joseph's coat of many colors: This may be made as are the other striped garments, but with other colorings more striking and attractive.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED

Israel (or Jacob) patriarch of Canaan.

Joseph, Israel's favorite son.

<i>Reuben</i>	<i>Gad</i>	} sons of Israel
<i>Simeon</i>	<i>Asher</i>	
<i>Levi</i>	<i>Issachar</i>	
<i>Judah</i>	<i>Zebulun</i>	
<i>Dan</i>	<i>Benjamin</i>	
<i>Naphtali</i>		

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

Butler to Pharaoh.

Magicians to Pharaoh's Court.

Guards to Pharaoh's Court.

Servants to Pharaoh.

Steward to Joseph.

Servant to Joseph.

Servant to Israel.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

ACT I

Scene 1

Hebron; the tent of ISRAEL

The curtain rises on the TWELVE BROTHERS, sitting and standing in groups of three or four, conversing in pantomime. ISRAEL, followed by SERVANT bearing coat of many colors, enters at back of stage. The BROTHERS immediately rise and range themselves six on a side, while ISRAEL pauses at center back and raises both arms high in blessing as he speaks. The BROTHERS bow and then answer in concert.

Israel: Peace be unto you, my children.

Brothers: And upon thee, peace!

Israel (seats himself): Come hither, Joseph, my son, the delight of my old age! Take thou this coat, I pray thee, this coat of many colors, which marks thee prince in all thy father's house and first among thy brethren. My blessing goeth with it.

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May it inspire thee to noble deeds, so that thou mayst bring honor and glory to the name of thy fathers!

Joseph (kneeling): I thank thee, my father, that thou dost so honor me.

Rising, he puts the coat on. All the ELDER BROTHERS show signs of hatred and jealousy.

Simeon (aside): See, our father loveth him more than us!

Levi (aside): Behold this favorite of our father!

Joseph: But hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed. For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf!

Levi (aside): Listen to this dreamer!

Judah (scornfully): Shalt thou indeed reign over us?

Simeon: Shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?

Joseph: Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

Israel (rises in astonishment): What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

Joseph: My father, I cannot now interpret these dreams which the Lord hath given me. In his own time he will reveal their meaning.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

The BROTHERS appear to discuss JOSEPH and his dreams in angry pantomime.

Reuben (steps forward and bows): Father, we would now depart to feed thy flock in Shechem.

Israel: Even so, my sons. Farewell, and may peace go with you!

Brothers (bowing): Peace be unto thee. Farewell.

Exeunt the TEN ELDER BROTHERS, looking hatefully at JOSEPH, who does not notice them.

Curtain

Scene 2

The plain of Dothan

The TEN BROTHERS are sitting and lying in careless attitudes near front of stage. SIMEON, shading his eyes with his hand, seems to see something a great way off. The others also look intently after he speaks.

Simeon: Behold, this dreamer cometh!

Asher: Yea, the dreamer in his gaudy robe!

Dan: Perchance he hath another dream to relate wherein we all again shall bow before him!

Several (with scornful laughter): Not I!

Naphtali: Or he cometh to spy upon us and bring back an evil report to Israel our father.

Levi: Come now therefore, let us slay him and cast him into some pit!

Dan (gleefully): Then we will see what will become of his dreams!

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Judah: But what then should we say to our father?
At our hands will he require the lad!

Simeon: We will say, some evil beast hath devoured him.

REUBEN, who has begun to look troubled at LEVI's speech, comes forward and speaks persuasively.

Reuben: Nay, now, my brethren, do not sin against the child!

They turn on him fiercely.

Levi: Sinneth he not against us, with his dreams and boastings?

Zebulun: His dreams, forsooth! Our sheaves doing his sheaf homage!

Judah: Daily is he honored above us, his elders!

Simeon: We will endure his arrogance no longer!

Gad: Yea, and he also informeth against us. Come, let us kill him!

Issachar: Kill him, and hide his body in the pit!

Reuben: Nevertheless, hear me, brethren! Let us not kill the lad. We will shed no blood, but cast him alive into this pit, that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him. Lo, the pit is empty, there is no water in it. Shall he not doubtless perish?

Simeon: Thou sayest well.

Others: Ay, the pit! We will cast him alive into the pit!

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Asher (warningly): He draweth nigh.

They hastily resume their former attitudes.

Enter JOSEPH, entirely unsuspecting.

Gad: Hail, Prince Joseph! What hast thou dreamed today?

Joseph: Peace be upon you, brethren! Is it well with you?

They seize him roughly and strip off the coat of many colors. At first he is bewildered and does not resist.

Joseph (struggles): What do ye, brethren? Lo, our father hath sent me — Cease! Let me go!

They push and drag him toward the door at back of stage.

Dan: Perchance in the pit he may dream another dream!

They disappear laughing.

Reuben (follows slowly): Thus have I prevailed upon them to do him no hurt? I will take him out of this pit in secret and deliver him again to his father.

Exit REUBEN.

Curtain

Scene 3

Scene: the same.

Enter the BROTHERS, except REUBEN and JOSEPH. SIMEON carries JOSEPH's coat.

Simeon: Now will we kill a kid of the goats and dip the coat in the blood. Then shall we say to our

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

father, This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.

Issachar: Yea, then shall he say, Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces by some evil beast.

Naphtali (points): Lo, yonder! A caravan of Ishmaelites from Gilead!

Zebulun: Yea, with camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

Judah (starts up): What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh. And the price will we divide among ourselves!

Levi: I am content.

Simeon: Yea, and I also.

Others: We are content.

Judah: Reuben tendeth the flock by yonder water-course, — let us make haste ere he return.

All: Yea, let us hasten.

Exeunt, toward pit.

Enter REUBEN from opposite direction.

Reuben: Lo, they have departed! Now will I make haste to lift up Joseph out of this pit, that he may return in peace unto our father.

Starts out but stops suddenly.

But whither are they gone? The sun is yet high! There is no sound — can it be that they have slain the lad?

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Rushes out to look into pit, and returns in distress.

The child is not, and I, whither shall I go?

Exit REUBEN.

Curtain

ACT II

Scene 1

Scene: Egypt. Palace of Pharaoh.

The curtain rises on PHARAOH, in attitude of dejection, seated on throne. GUARDS stationed behind and at either side. WISE MEN, with scrolls or records, consulting at the right. THE BUTLER, kneeling before PHARAOH, offering wine in gold or silver cup on salver. Pharaoh (refuses it): Nay, I wish it not. My heart is heavy within me.

Butler (bowing): My lord is troubled?

Pharaoh: I have dreamed a dream, and told it to all the magicians and all the wise men of Egypt, and there is none that can interpret it to me.

Butler: I pray thee, my lord, let thy servant speak, and be not angry with thy servant.

(PHARAOH gives assent.)

There is a young man, a Hebrew, who was also with me in prison; and lo, I dreamed, and he did interpret me my dream, and it happened even as he foretold.

Pharaoh: Where is this youth? Let him be brought.

Butler (bows): He was servant to Potiphar, the captain of the guard.

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Pharaoh (to SERVANT): Go, bring him hither quickly.

SERVANT bows, and exit.

Pharaoh (to butler): What is he called? Hath he of a surety power to interpret dreams?

Butler (bows): He is called Joseph, my lord. From the land of the Hebrews was he stolen away and sold into Egypt. And not only my dream did he faithfully foretell, but that of the chief baker. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was. Me, Pharaoh restored unto mine office, and the baker he hanged!

Enter SERVANT with JOSEPH. SERVANT bows. JOSEPH kneels before throne and touches forehead to floor. PHARAOH motions him to rise.

Pharaoh: I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it; and I have heard say of thee that thou canst understand a dream, to tell its meaning.

Joseph: It is not in me. God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

Pharaoh: In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river, and there came up out of the river seven kine, fat-fleshed and well-favoured; and they fed in a meadow.

And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill-favoured and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness. And the lean and ill-favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine, but lo, they were still ill-favoured as at the beginning.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

And I dreamed again, and lo, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good.

And behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them.

And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears; and I told this to the magicians, but there was none that could declare it unto me.

Joseph: Behold, what God is about to do he showeth unto Pharaoh! The seven good kine are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dream is one. And the seven thin and ill-favoured kine that came up after them, and the seven empty ears, blasted with the east wind, shall be seven years of famine.

Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, and after them come seven years of famine; and the famine shall be very grievous, and God shall shortly bring all this to pass.

Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

And let them gather up food in these good years that come, and lay up corn in the cities under the hand of Pharaoh, for a store to the land against the grievous famine.

PHARAOH *turns and addresses group of WISE-MEN, OFFICERS, etc., who consult before answering.*

Pharaoh: What say ye? Hath he not spoken well?

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

Officer (bows): My lord, the thing is good in the eyes of all thy servants; let Pharaoh do according as he hath spoken, that the land perish not through the famine.

Pharaoh: Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

Turns to JOSEPH.

Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only on the throne will I be greater than thou!

Beckons to JOSEPH, who kneels while PHARAOH puts ring on his finger and gold chain about his neck. PHARAOH motions him to rise, and, himself rising, extends arm toward group of OFFICERS.

Pharaoh: Bow the knee! Bow the knee! For behold, I have made him ruler over all the land of Egypt!

All immediately prostrate themselves.

Curtain

ACT III

Scene 1

Egypt. Palace of Joseph.

Curtain rises on JOSEPH and STEWARD, standing in conversation near right front of stage. SERVANT stationed at door. Enter ANOTHER SERVANT.

Servant (bows): My lord, there stand without certain Hebrews, from Canaan, come to buy corn.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Joseph (with interest): Hebrews, saidst thou? Bring them in.

Exit SERVANT. Enter the TEN BROTHERS and prostrate themselves. SERVANT takes position by door. JOSEPH gives start of recognition.

Joseph (aside): As the Lord liveth, my brethren!

Controls agitation and speaks harshly.

Whence come ye?

Motions them to rise.

Reuben (bows): My Lord, we come from the land of Canaan, to buy food.

Joseph: Ye are spies. To see the nakedness of the land are ye come!

Reuben (bows): Nay, my lord; but to buy food are thy servants come.

Levi (bows): We are all one man's sons; we are true men; thy servants are no spies.

Joseph: Nay, ye are spies. Surely ye be not brethren!

Simeon (bows): Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not.

Joseph (eagerly): Is your father yet alive? Have ye another brother?

Judah (bows): My lord, we have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one.

Joseph (resumes harshness): Again I say unto you, ye are spies! By the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not all go forth hence except your brother come hither.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

Simeon (bows): Nay, my lord, the lad cannot leave his father; for if he should leave his father, his father would die.

Joseph: Now hereby shall ye be proved. If ye be true men, let one of you be bound and cast into prison. And go ye the rest, carry corn for the famine of your houses, and bring your youngest brother unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. So shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die.

Levi (to BROTHERS): We are verily guilty concerning our brother Joseph, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear!

Judah: Yea, therefore is this distress come upon us!

Reuben: Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child? and ye would not hear!

Joseph (sternly): Why whisper ye among yourselves? Verily, ye shall not see my face again unless your youngest brother be with you.

Simeon (bows): O my lord, I pray thee —

Joseph (interrupts): Bind me this man and take him away!

Exeunt SERVANTS with SIMEON.

Joseph (to brothers): Take ye food for your households and be gone, and bring your youngest brother unto me. Then shall I know that ye are true men and not spies; and I will deliver unto you your brother that is bound.

Exeunt BROTHERS in great dejection.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Joseph (to STEWARD): Fill now their sacks with corn, and give them provisions and set them on their way. And do thou privately restore every man his money into his sack.

STEWARD bows, and exit.

Curtain

ACT III

Scene 2

Hebron. Tent of Israel.

Curtain rises on ISRAEL, REUBEN, LEVI and JUDAH. They remain standing during the scene, moving about as naturally as possible.

Israel: Behold, the famine is still sore in the land. Go ye again into Egypt, buy us a little food.

Reuben: My father, did we not tell thee aforetime how that the man, the lord of the country, did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face except your brother be with you?

Israel: Yea, ye have told me; but I will send him not. Some mischief will befall him.

Levi: If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food. But if thou wilt not send Benjamin we will not go down, for the man is even as Pharaoh.

Israel: Nay, he shall not go down. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye would take Benjamin away!

Reuben: Without him we dare not go.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

Israel (impatiently): Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me as to tell the man ye had yet a brother?

Judah: The man asked us straitly of our state and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? Have ye another brother? And so we told him. Could we know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

ISRAEL shakes his head in distress and doubt.

Levi: I pray thee, send the lad with us, that we may arise and go; for without food we must die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones.

Israel: Ye know that Rachel bare me two sons. And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since. And if ye take Benjamin also from me, and evil befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Judah (with great earnestness): Behold, I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him. If I bring him not unto thee again, then let me bear the blame forever!

ISRAEL walks slowly across stage before replying.

Israel: If it must be so, now do this: take of the best fruits of the land, and carry down the man a present. And take double money in your hand; and the money that was found in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand. Peradventure it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man. And God Almighty give you mercy before the man,

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin! If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved!

BROTHERS bow. *Exeunt.*

Curtain

ACT IV

Egypt. Palace of JOSEPH.

Between this and the preceding act the BROTHERS have returned to Egypt, taking BENJAMIN. JOSEPH has released SIMEON and feasted the whole party at his house. They start home, still ignorant of his identity, but are recalled at his order. The curtain rises on JOSEPH seated at center back, SERVANTS in attendance. Enter STEWARD and bows.

Steward: My lord, I have done as thou didst command, and have concealed thy cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest.

Joseph: And hast thou sent to overtake them ere they reach the inn?

Steward (bows): Yea, my lord, and lo, they are even now returned.

Joseph: It is well. Bring them hither.

Exit STEWARD. Enter the ELEVEN BROTHERS, and prostrate themselves. Each carries his sack. They remain kneeling till the conclusion of the act.

Joseph (sternly): Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good, to steal my silver cup? Did I not entreat you kindly, and give you to eat bread in

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

mine own house, and deliver you your brother that was bound? And lo, this have ye done!

The BROTHERS look at one another in amazement and dismay.

Reuben: Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing. Behold, the money which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again to thee out of the land of Canaan; how then should we steal out of thy house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondsmen!

Joseph: Now let it be according to these words. He with whom the cup be found shall be my servant, but ye shall be blameless.

To STEWARD.

Open every man's sack and search, beginning with the eldest!

STEWARD obeys, and finds the cup in BENJAMIN'S sack. A groan goes up from all the BROTHERS.

Joseph: What deed is this that ye have done? Knew ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?

Judah (aside): What shall we say unto my lord?

Levi (aside): What shall we speak?

Simeon (aside): How shall we clear ourselves?

Reuben (very humbly): God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants; behold, we are my lord's bondsmen, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.

THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT

Joseph: Nay, but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.

Judah: O my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh!

Joseph: Say on.

Judah: At thy command, my lord, we brought the lad down from the land of Canaan; and, behold, our father said unto us, If mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. For lo, his brother Joseph is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And I thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee again, then let me bear the blame forever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let me abide instead of the lad a bondsman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren.

Half rises on the last sentence, with arms out-stretched in supplication.

Joseph (to STEWARD): Cause every man to go out from me!

Exeunt STEWARD and other SERVANTS

Joseph (rises): I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?

They are dumbfounded and terrified.

I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN

Levi (in awestruck whisper): Joseph! See how our sin has found us out!

Others (also aside): Yea, our sin is upon us! Now must we doubtless perish.

Joseph: Nay, my brethren, be not afraid, nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve your lives, for there are yet five years of famine. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God, and he hath made me ruler of all the land of Egypt. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither, that I may nourish him and you and all your households throughout the grievous famine!

He stretches out his arms toward them as they still hesitate.

Oh, my brethren, come near to me, I pray you! Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you!

Embraces BENJAMIN

Curtain

[REDACTED]

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